

Job's Intercession: Antidote to Divine Folly

The Book of Job closes with the hero's restoration. Job recovers his family, fortune and social position, but this happy end used to be considered of little theological value as it seems to contradict the points painstakingly made through the preceding dialogues⁽¹⁾. It is our contention that the Epilogue is the key to the entire book. The present essay demonstrates how Job 42,8 resolves the tensions developed in the narrative and elevates Job to the position of intercessor to soothe the effects of divine folly.

1. *Job's Partial Restoration*

With twice as many heads in his new herds (compare Job 1,3 and 42,12), twice as many sons⁽²⁾, surrounded by family and acquaintances, Job could consider himself a happy man. Yet, the title of a recent monograph on Job 42 places the adjective 'happy' between inverted commas, suggesting that Job's happy end does not see the protagonist restored to the status quo ante but rather emerging scarred and transformed⁽³⁾.

Job 42,12 reports that "YHWH blessed Job's after more than his before", yet his loathsome sores are never said to have healed. Since YHWH agreed with the satan that striking Job in the flesh was the ultimate test (Job 2,7), the failure to mention Job's healing gives the lie to Eliphaz's claim that Shaddai both wounds and heals (Job 5,18). Job's healing may be included in the blanket expression "The Lord

⁽¹⁾ See D.J.A. CLINES, "Deconstructing the Book of Job", *The Bible as Rhetoric* (ed. M. WARNER) (London 1990) 65-80.

⁽²⁾ שבעה is a dual form of seven: E. DHORME, *A Commentary on the Book of Job* (London 1967) 651-652; A. GUILLAUME, *Studies in the Book of Job* (Leiden 1968) 140; HALOT, 1401. The non-doubling of the number of daughters reflects their legal status. While the fruits of a woman's labour benefited her husband, the marriage usually did not sever her ties to her agnatic group who remained the one who had to pay compensation for any misdeeds the woman may commit even after her marriage: F.H. STEWARD, "Customary Law among the Bedouin of the Middle East and North Africa", *Nomadic Societies in the Middle East and North Africa* (ed. D. CHATY) (HdO 81; Leiden 2006) 259.

⁽³⁾ K.N. NGWA, *The Hermeneutics of the 'Happy' Ending in Job 42:7-17* (BZAW 354; Berlin 2005).

restored the fortunes of Job” (Job 42,10)⁽⁴⁾, although the careful listing of assets makes the failure to mention Job’s healing all the more conspicuous. Damage to material possessions, including children, incurred during the first onslaught of tribulations was compensated, but the satan’s second assault left Job with serious after-effects. Ancient readers were aware of the problem and sometimes filled in the blank with descriptions of the circumstances of Job’s healing⁽⁵⁾. Yet, the narrator presents something other than a complete restoration, only partially fulfilling the expectations of seeing Job restored to square one raised in the dialogues⁽⁶⁾. Job keeps his hand on his mouth (Job 40,4) and fades away as the narrator shifts the focus onto the divine character whose final status is crucial to the purpose of the entire book and to the religious concerns of its audience.

2. *Divine Folly Revealed*

As the final verses of the book describe Job’s material recovery (Job 42,10-17), the attention lingers over the three beautiful daughters and their delicious names. This sugar-coating helps the audience swallow the bitter pills contained in verses 7-9. The key to the Epilogue and possibly to the whole book is found in YHWH’s speech to Eliphaz who is informed that unless he and his friends offer holocausts while Job intercedes for them, YHWH would commit a folly against them (Job 42,8). The syntax of verse 8 presents some difficulties although the meaning of עשית עמכם נבלה is clear: “to do with you a folly”. The different translations result from the translators’ uneasiness with the obvious meaning of the words. Comparing Job’s wife to foolish women (נבלות Job 2,10) and attributing folly to the outcasts (בני נבל Job 30,8) poses no problem to translators who are

⁽⁴⁾ S. TERRIEN, *Job* (Neuchâtel 1963) 272-273.

⁽⁵⁾ The *Testament of Job* is conscious of the problem and mentions the healing at the beginning of YHWH’s answer to Job (TestJob 47.5-6, quoting Job 38,3; 40,7). As he challenged Job to gird himself like a man, God supplies magic girdles that heal Job right then. Job then bestows the girdles to his daughters as inheritance: P. MACHINIST, “Job’s Daughters and their Inheritance in the Testament of Job and its Biblical Congeners”, *The Echoes of Many Texts* (eds W.G. DEVER – E.J. WRIGHT) (Atlanta 1997) 76. The Quran does not state that Job was healed (38,41-43). In later tradition, Job is cured in the river that flowed where he stomped his foot. See J.-F. LEGRAIN, “Variations musulmanes sur le thème de Job”, *Bulletin d’études orientales* 37-38 (1985-1986) 51-114.

⁽⁶⁾ G. WILSON, “Preknowledge, Anticipation and the Poetics of Job”, *JSOT* 30 (2005) 246.

usually males enjoying a desirable social position. But when foolishness (נבלה) (re) appears in the divine mouth as the description of a potential divine action, translators get fidgety. According to Origen, at first the LXX did not translate the difficult Hebrew phrase נבלה...אם פניו (Job 42,8bα) (7). Later editions of the LXX compensate this lacuna with a text that remains shorter than the Hebrew. The sensitive expression לבלתי עשות עמכם נבלה “lest to do with you folly” is condensed into ἀπώλεσα ἂν ὑμᾶς “I would have destroyed you” (8), a perfect case of *lectio facilior* dodging the mention of folly. Most Bible translations transfer the foolishness directly to the friends: “I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly” (NRSV) (9). This praiseworthy device shields the audience from the brunt of a tough verse since the other occurrences of the expression ‘commit a folly’ (עשה נבלה) do not mitigate the gravity of the action YHWH says he was about to do to Job’s friends. Whether it refers to the rape of Dinah (Gen 34,7), premarital sex (Deut 22,21), stealing devoted things (Josh 7,15), gang rape (Judg 19,23; 20,6), sister rape (2 Sam 13,12), or adultery with a neighbour’s wife (Jer 29,23), every case involves outrageous acts. Attributing the folly in question to the friends avoids the suggestion that God may be potentially capable of such acts, but remains a clear case of translation betrayal. Aware of the problem, some exegetes play down foolishness (10), and the narrator has made it easy for readers to brush aside the import of this single occurrence in the Hebrew Scriptures where God is said to be the one doing *nebalah* since it is only mentioned as a potential (11). Hence, exegetes marvel at the *nekonah* of Job’s speech but are oblivious to the *nebalah* of YHWH’s potential deed five words earlier. In a book

(7) M. GOREA, *Job repensé ou trahi?* (Paris 2007) 220; P.J. GENTRY, *The Asterisked Materials in the Greek Job* (Atlanta 1995) 529.

(8) NETS: A New English Translation of the Septuagint, ©2004 by the International Organisation for the Septuagint and Cognate studies Inc. Used by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved.

(9) R. GORDIS, *The Book of Job* (New York 1978) 495: “to exhibit you as נבלים senseless, foolish *ie* to expose you to disgrace”.

(10) D.J. O’CONNOR, “The Cunning Hand”, *ITQ* 57 (1991) 21 and M. POPE, *Job* (AB 15; New York 1965) 288: “Let my servant Job intercede for you; because I will accept him so that I deal not rashly with you”. N.C. HABEL, *The Book of Job* (London 1985) 575: “I will show favour and not shame you”. N.H. TUR-SINAI, *The Book of Job* (Jerusalem 1957) 580 rejects the emendation of נבלה into כלה but renders עשה נבלה עם as “to do ill to”.

(11) S.E. BALENTINE, *Job* (Macon, GA 2006) 713.

devoting an entire chapter to wisdom (Job 28), the possibility that YHWH may commit foolishness should be given some consideration.

Whether Job 28 is at pains to put wisdom out of human reach or that wisdom is within human grasp through the fear of the Lord is disputable⁽¹²⁾. That Elohim discerns the way of wisdom and knows its place is clear enough (Job 28,23). His privileged vantage-point certainly affords a panoramic view from which he counts wisdom, determines it and even probes it⁽¹³⁾. But does this mean that YHWH is wise? Does it exclude the possibility that some of YHWH's actions may not be entirely wise, that some of them may even be foolish? Proverbs 8,22 affirms that YHWH acquired or created (קנה) wisdom but Job 28 remains non-committal on the subject of YHWH's relation to wisdom⁽¹⁴⁾. YHWH and wisdom are kept separate. A deficit of wisdom within YHWH is not excluded. If wisdom is not a precious ore to be found and possessed but the result of creative activity, and if the moral habit of resisting evil is the way in which one comes to know wisdom⁽¹⁵⁾, then Job 28 may be read as incriminating YHWH. Job has been turning away from evil (סר מרע) from verse one on (Job 1,1; 28,28), but the same cannot be about YHWH who let the satan mislead him. YHWH admit having succumbed to the satan's incitement to swallow Job (וחסיתי בו לבלעו) and does not dispute the unfairness of the tribulations by adding that it was for nothing (חנם Job 2,3). YHWH's words are addressed as a reproach to the satan but they nevertheless constitute a confession on the part of YHWH, an admission that giving a free hand to the satan was less than wise. YHWH does not dodge his responsibility for the disasters that befell Job. YHWH's confession in the Epilogue that, had he punished the friends, he would have committed a foolish deed coheres fully with his initial confession in Job 2,3. YHWH is indeed capable of foolish deeds.

Trying to cover up theopathism is exegetically foolish⁽¹⁶⁾ since the

(12) P.S. FIDDES, "Where shall Wisdom Be Found?", *After the Exile* (eds J. BARTON – D.J. REIMER) (Macon, GA 1996) 171-190. D.J.A. CLINES, "'The Fear of the Lord is Wisdom' (Job 28:28). A Semantic and Contextual Study", *Job 28* (ed. E. VAN WOLDE) (Leiden 2003) 57-92.

(13) P.J.P. VAN HECKE, "Searching for and Exploring Wisdom", *Job 28* (ed. VAN WOLDE), 139-162.

(14) Pace N. HABEL, "The Implications of God Discovering Wisdom in Earth", *Job 28* (ed. VAN WOLDE), 293.

(15) So C.A. NEWSOME, "Dialogue and Allegorical Hermeneutics", *Job 28* (ed. VAN WOLDE), 306-305.

(16) POPE, *Job*, 291.

narrator does not hesitate to name YHWH as the author of the evil that destroyed Job's wealth and health. At first, when the friends heard about all the evil that befell Job, they came to comfort him and then argued about the cause of that evil (Job 2,11). At the end, family and acquaintances comfort Job from the consequences of the evil that YHWH caused him (Job 42,11). There is thus no reason to deny the existence of divine folly. It is no more troubling than depicting YHWH as deceptive (1 Kgs 22,19-23; Jer 20,7-13; Ezek 14,1-14)⁽¹⁷⁾, as the giver of laws that are not good (Ezek 20,25) or as the creator of evil (Isa 45,7).

3. *Job's Innocence Confirmed*

The narrator wisely anticipated that divine folly may be too much for some readers. Hence, the first part of chapter 42 is couched in such a way as to let troubled readers (mis)understand Job's final tirade as a confession of sins by a repentant Job. It has long been recognized that in Job 42,1-6 Job confesses his ignorance but nowhere relents, repents, repudiates his words or shows any remorse⁽¹⁸⁾. Even if the one who spoke without knowledge is identified with Job⁽¹⁹⁾, it does not necessarily turn Job into a sinner since words spoken "without knowledge" (Job 42,8) may nevertheless be correct⁽²⁰⁾. Yet, many readers need a culprit and blame Job to alleviate the pain that blaming God would entail⁽²¹⁾. However, the kethib/qere in 42,2 makes it difficult to decide who knows what and the reader of Job 42,1-6 is soon entangled in a web of possibilities that leaves him as ignorant a Job himself⁽²²⁾. The consonantal text דעת כי כל חוכל "you know that you can <do> all" is non-committal compared to "I know you are omnipotent". Is Job the one hiding counsel (verse 3) or is it YHWH? That Job sees God with one eye (עין Job 42,5) is a shaky textual basis to establish Job's conversion or complete change of perspective. If Job

⁽¹⁷⁾ N.R. BOWEN, "Can God Be Trusted?" *A Feminist Companion to the Latter Prophets* (ed. A. BRENNER) (Sheffield 1995) 354-365.

⁽¹⁸⁾ D.A. PATRICK, "Job's Address of God", *ZAW* 91 (1979) 268-281.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Job 38,2; 42,3: J.J. BIMSON, "Who is 'this' in 'Who is this...?'", *JSOT* 87 (2000) 125-128.

⁽²⁰⁾ C.A. NEWSOM, *The Book of Job* (Oxford 2003) 257.

⁽²¹⁾ H. PYPER, "The Reader in Pain: Job as Text and Pretext", *Text as Pretext. Essays in Honour of Robertson Davidson* (ed. R.P. CARROLL) (Sheffield 1992) 234-255.

⁽²²⁾ Analysed by E.J. VAN WOLDE, "Job 42,1-6: the Reversal of Job", *The Book of Job* (ed. W.A.M. BEUKEN) (BETL 114; Leuven 1994) 223-250.

at all repents in Job 42,6, is he repenting in dust and ashes (although he is already there since Job 2,8) or he is repenting of dust and ashes and thus end his mourning? And what is he repenting about?⁽²³⁾ Some readers want the Epilogue to rescue the integrity of God more than Job's⁽²⁴⁾ while others claim that Job's contrition (נחמה) in 42,6a is a veritable repentance although the term תשובה is not stated⁽²⁵⁾. In Job, the problem of suffering applies first and foremost to the translators. Blaming Job rather than God may alleviate some of their pain, but it forces them to dispute the force of the divine stamp of approval in favour of Job⁽²⁶⁾ and puts the blamers in the precarious position of Job's friends whom YHWH declares guilty (Job 42,7-8).

4. *Resolving the Meaning of the Prologue*

That God may be guilty of foolishly bringing evil upon innocent Job throws light upon Job's statement in the Prologue concerning how humans should receive good and evil. That we receive good from God's hand is unproblematic, but translators render the second part of the phrase as a rhetorical question "don't we also receive evil from the hand of God?" (ואת־הרע לא־נקבל)⁽²⁷⁾. Yet, there is not the faintest trace of a question in that sentence in the Hebrew text. Since a rhetorical question can legitimately be postulated in the presence of an interrogative proposition — which is not the case here — the phrase can only mean "although we receive the good from the god, the evil we do not receive" (Job 2,10). The second requirement to postulate a rhetorical question is that the answer is too obvious to be supplied. However, if Job 2,10 asked a question its answer would be far from obvious. The Psalms display no ready acceptance of evil from the hand of God and suggest that humans should respond to evil with lament

⁽²³⁾ W.L. MICHEL, "Confidence and Despair. Job 19,25-27 in Light of Northwest Semitic Studies", *The Book of Job* (ed. W. BEUKEN), 176-177.

⁽²⁴⁾ L.G. PERDUE, *Wisdom in Revolt* (JSOTSS 112; Sheffield 1991) 238. Resisting C.G. Jung's devastating critique of the deity in the Book of Job, M.A. COREY, *Job, Jonah and the Unconscious* (Lanham 1995) 116-143 claims that God multiplied Job's wound without *apparent* cause and develops an instrumental perspective to exonerate God.

⁽²⁵⁾ A. LACOCQUE, 'The Deconstruction of Job's Fundamentalism', *JBL* 126 (2007) 91.

⁽²⁶⁾ N. WHYBRAY, *Job* (Sheffield 1998) 172-173 limits God's commendation to Job's retraction in 42,1-6.

⁽²⁷⁾ W. VOGELS, "Job's Empty Pious Slogans (Job 1,20-22; 2,8-10)", *The Book of Job* (ed. BEUKEN), 373.

rather than with praise. From chapter 3 onwards, Job displays no such attitude of praise, no stoical acceptance of his fate. The mistranslation of Job 2,10 as a rhetorical question erases the narrative progression intended, wherein the Epilogue teaches Job to take into account an element of divine nature he had overlooked in the Prologue. Because divine folly is a possibility, evil often strikes the innocent as much as the guilty. Job is a case in point. That on legitimate theological grounds Job refused to accept evil from the hand of YHWH is irrelevant, as much as whether he blessed or cursed God. Monotheism offers a limited number of options to integrate evil. Steering a careful course between the Charybdis of blaming another divinity for evil and the Scylla of attributing evil directly to YHWH, the Joban scribes use folly as a shield. Folly protects YHWH and the Joban scribes by deflecting the negative impact of attributing the evil that befell Job directly to YHWH. But divine folly also protects Job's innocence. If the evil that befell Job is not a punishment, YHWH is necessarily the author of that evil. This is nothing new since the Egyptian sage Ipu-wer expressed doubts over the common notion that the Creator is the herdsman of all, and that there is no evil in the divine heart. After considering the evils that befell his land, Ipu-wer concludes that "Fighting has come and the punisher of crimes commits them"⁽²⁸⁾. Since YHWH insists upon his role as creator in Job 38–41, evil actions are to be attributed to YHWH, but if they spring from bouts of folly rather than from an inherently evil nature, these evil deeds need not be justified or explained. Folly, however, does not reduce YHWH's liability. For this reason, the Epilogue from verse 10 onwards is strictly devoted to economics; carefully taking stock of how YHWH doubles Job's possessions to confirm the full payment of legal compensation for the damage incurred as required by Exod 22,1-9⁽²⁹⁾.

The notion of compensation is not an easy one to swallow either. Job 1,21b read as "YHWH gave and YHWH took back; may the name of YHWH be blessed" has recently been adduced as evidence against

⁽²⁸⁾ Admonitions of Ipu-wer (12:1-5); M. LICHTHEIM, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* (Berkeley 1973) 160; W.W. HALLO (ed.), *The Context of Scripture* (Leiden 1997) 97.

⁽²⁹⁾ F.I. ANDERSEN, *Job* (Leicester 1976) 293; M. GEEVARUGHESE, *The Role of the Epilogue in the Book of Job* (PhD dissertation, Madison 1995) 37-54; J. MILES, *God. A Biography* (New York 1995) 327. D. GEERAERTS, "Caught in a Web of Irony", *Job 28* (ed. VAN WOLDE), 53, even finds a hint of over-compensation.

the notion of compensation because this verse is supposed to sever from the onset the link between piety and reward. Job's initial prosperity being granted on a purely gratuitous and unconditional basis, Job's restored riches must also be granted unconditionally and thus cannot be compensatory⁽³⁰⁾. That Job's initial prosperity is not rewarding his piety is probably correct, but the principle does not apply to his renewed fortunes in the Epilogue. Compensation is not reward. Compensation seeks to make up for losses incurred, irrelevant of whether or not the injured party deserved the lost goods in the first place. Compensation is a consequence of ownership while reward has to do with merit. Since Job is innocent and YHWH admits having hurt Job for nothing, the matter is not one of reward for Job's piety but of compensation for YHWH's misdeed. This bears directly on the translation of Job 1,21. "YHWH gave and YHWH took" does not delve into whether or not Job merited what YHWH gave him. The problem is that YHWH gave and then took back⁽³¹⁾, and it is all the more problematic since YHWH took back for naught (Job 2,3).

The consensus in translating the verb בָּרַךְ in "May the name of YHWH be blessed" as if it obviously means "to bless" and cannot possibly mean "to curse" misses an important aspect of the Prologue⁽³²⁾. The first of the six occurrences of this crucial verb in the Prologue has to be translated euphemistically: "maybe my sons sinned and cursed Elohim in their hearts" (Job 1,5) while the next occurrence requires a normal rendering: "You have blessed the work of his hand" (Job 1,10). The alternation between cursing and blessing expressed by the same verb precludes any recourse to context and requires considering each of the following occurrences in its own right⁽³³⁾. Does

⁽³⁰⁾ D. IVANSKI, *The Dynamics of Job's Intercession* (AnBib 161; Roma 2006) 358-359.

⁽³¹⁾ According to a French proverb, *Donner c'est donner, reprendre c'est voler* (A gift is a gift; to take it away is theft).

⁽³²⁾ H. SPIECKERMANN, "Die Satanisierung Gottes: Zur inneren Konkordanz von Novelle, Dialog und Gottesreden im Hiobbuch", *"Wer ist wie du, Herr, unter den Göttern?"* (eds I. KOOTTSIEPER – J. van OORSCHOT – D. RÖMHELD – H.M. WAHL) (Göttingen 1994) 435.

⁽³³⁾ A. COOPER, "Reading and Misreading in the Prologue of Job", *JSOT* 46 (1990) 67-79; T. LINAFFELT, "The Undecidability of בָּרַךְ in the Prologue to Job and Beyond", *BiblInt* 4 (1996) 154-172; Ph. GUILLAUME, "Caution: Rhetorical Questions", *BN* 103 (2000) 11-16; H.S. PYPHER, *An Unsuitable Book* (Sheffield 2005) 59; D. MATHEWSON, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job* (LHB/OTS 450; London 2006) 56-63.

the satan suggest that Job will bless or curse YHWH to his face if God strikes him (Job 1,11)? Does Job bless YHWH when what was given is taken back (Job 1,21)? Will Job bless or curse YHWH to his face when his health is gone (Job 2,5)? Is it the cursing or the blessing of God which should cause Job's death (Job 2,9)? The beauty of the Prologue is that none of these questions can receive a definite answer. Narrative tension is built at the onset to carry the audience through the whole drama thanks to this fundamental issue. On which basis can one assert that Job breaks out in praise upon losing his health and everything else? In light of the next chapters, the euphemistic rendering of Job 1,21b actually makes more sense: "YHWH gave but YHWH took back, cursed be the name of YHWH!" The opposite would turn the Book of Job into a Stoic manifesto which cannot be the case since the Epilogue justifies Job's screaming and ranting against the unfairness of his fate. However, the Epilogue moves beyond the issue of Job's blessing or cursing. Since YHWH has admitted already in the Prologue that he took back for naught, the Epilogue depicts YHWH's logical compensation of Job's losses, thus assuming full responsibility for his crime. In the end, it makes no difference whether Job cursed or blessed God in the Prologue. In the very end, Job indeed dies and thus confirms that the person who spoke the least spoke the best. Job's wife was right after all when she said "Bless/curse God and die!" (Job 2,9; 42,17). The Epilogue resolves the ambiguity of the Prologue through the notion of divine folly, and the lesson was not forgotten in the New Testament (1 Cor 1,25). When everything is said, the heart of the matter is how to deal with YHWH's left hand. The Epilogue adds that if human behaviour makes little difference to human fate, humans are not left entirely powerless in the face of YHWH's potential folly.

5. Job's Elevation as Intercessor

Readers spontaneously identify with Job, with his revolt and sufferings⁽³⁴⁾. Yet, we can never be Job. We certainly suffer in our own flesh like Job, but not quite for the same reason since we may not be as blameless as Job is. We are more likely to be friends of heroes than heroes ourselves, in spite of our natural tendency to identify with heroes. Hence, YHWH's address to Eliphaz (Job 42,7-8) is more relevant to the audience than YHWH's address to Job, and much more

⁽³⁴⁾ J. VERMEYLEN, "Le méchant dans les discours des amis", *The Book of Job* (ed. W. BEUKEN), 102.

devastating. After letting the satan strike Job twice, God's wrath is about to fall upon Eliphaz and his friends and potentially upon us as well, unless holocausts and Job's intercession avert the disaster. The Epilogue is a graduation ceremony of sorts where Job receives the title of Master in Intercession. As the Job of Ezekiel 14, the Job of the Prologue saved neither son nor daughter. He was unable to avert the initial bout of folly because he first had to go through the test. Once an approved intercessor, Job is qualified to soothe the consequences of further cases of theopanthism by his prayer and, maybe, to prevent YHWH from acting foolishly too often. Not only Job recovers sons and daughters, but his intercession becomes efficacious beyond his own family circle.

Eliphaz is the first sinner for whose restoration Job prays, turning the table on the one who claimed (in Job 22,27-30) that if only Job repented, he would pray and YHWH would answer⁽³⁵⁾. Emphasizing the efficacy of Job's prayer for his friends, the book invites its audience to place itself under the benefit of Job's intercession against misfortune. Far from being a hurdle, Job's continued physical ailment fosters identification with a suffering humanity. For this reason, Job keeps a thorn in the flesh⁽³⁶⁾. His double riches work towards the same aim, proving that Job is divinely accepted since YHWH compensates his losses.

The failure to distinguish between retribution and compensation leads to dismiss the Epilogue as confirmation of the doctrine of retribution⁽³⁷⁾ and to miss the importance of compensation as confirmation of Job's intercessor status. That God compensates Job's losses confirms that Job retains divine favour and is thus able to intercede for divine clemency on behalf of less righteous people⁽³⁸⁾.

⁽³⁵⁾ R. GORDIS, *The Book of Job* (New York 1978) 494.

⁽³⁶⁾ F. MIES, *L'espérance de Job* (Leuven 2006) 434 (2 Cor 12,9).

⁽³⁷⁾ D.J.A. CLINES, "Why Is there a Book of Job, and What does It Do to You if You Read It?", *The Book of Job* (ed. W. BEUKEN), 18.

⁽³⁸⁾ It may be too bold to read here an early form of cult of Saint Job, but Ezekiel 14 attests the existence of a tradition in which the righteousness of Noah, Danel and Job granted them a privileged position to deal with divine anger. The tradition of Job the intercessor continues at the various tombs of Job in Oman, Palestine (al-Majdal), Syria (Nawā, Sheikh Sa'ad) and the Chouf. Although it does not mention Job, P.W. VAN DER HORST, "The Tombs of the Prophets in Early Judaism", *Japhet in the Tents of Shem* (Leuven 2002) 118-119 is highly relevant. See also J.-L. DÉCLAIS, *Les premiers musulmans face à la tradition biblique: trois récits sur Job* (Paris 1996).

The disasters that struck Job are not meant to represent everybody's sufferings because Job, as the richest and most righteous person who ever lived in the East, is unique⁽³⁹⁾. Job has to be unique to be qualified as universal intercessor. The point of the entire book is not theoretical, whether Job or anyone else serves God for naught. Job is a practical treatise demonstrating how sinful people who are never in position to blame God with injustice when disaster strikes may nevertheless hope to survive the potential of folly inherent to God⁽⁴⁰⁾.

6. *Holocausts and the Fear of the Lord*

YHWH prescribes holocausts alongside Job's intercession (Job 42,8). Had the smell of burning flesh not tickled his nostrils, YHWH makes no secrets that the evil he brought upon Job would have struck his friends as well (Job 42,7-9). The holocausts may underline the friends' culpability⁽⁴¹⁾, but it is far from obvious where they erred⁽⁴²⁾ and the book does not delve on this issue because it has become irrelevant as well. The critical matter is that YHWH's wrath is kindled and has to be placated before new disasters are unleashed. The reference to folly shifts the focus away from merit and guilt onto practical methods of dealing with divine wrath. Stated after a passage replete with the theme of 'not knowing' (Job 42,1-6), divine folly introduces the realm of mystery, a mystery with scary undertones. Job grapples with the recurrent issue which already preoccupied *Ludlul bel nemeqi* centuries earlier⁽⁴³⁾:

What is proper to oneself is an offence to one's god!
What in one's own heart seems despicable is proper to one's god!
Who knows the will of the gods in heaven?

⁽³⁹⁾ CLINES, "Why?", 20.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ E.F. DAVIS, "Job and Jacob: the Integrity of Faith", *The Whirlwind* (eds S.L. COOK – C.L. PATTON – J.W. WATTS) (JSOTSS 336; Sheffield 2001) 106.

⁽⁴¹⁾ According to I. KOTTSIEPER, "'Thema verfehlt!' Zur Kritik Gottes an den drei Freunden in Hiob 42,7-9", *Gott und Mensch im Dialog* (ed. M. WITTE) (BZAW 345; Berlin 2004) 775-785, 'ל' is not a preposition + suffix but a long form of the preposition (/ 3,22; 5,26; 15,22; 29,19). Rather than having spoken incorrectly about YHWH, the friends did not speak according to how the situation stands "hinsichtlich dessen, was Sache ist" (/ 1 Sam 26,4). J. VERMEYLEN, *Job, ses amis et son Dieu* (Leiden 1986) 32-64 argues that God defends the friends.

⁽⁴²⁾ GOOD, *Turns*, 396.

⁽⁴³⁾ "The Poem of the Righteous Sufferer", II, 34-36. The text in W.G. LAMBERT, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature* (Oxford 1960) 41; W.W. HALLO (ed.), *The Context of Scripture* (Leiden 1997) I, 488.

Divine behaviour has wondrous aspects beyond human comprehension (נִפְלְאוֹת Job 42,3), but it also has a flip side which is as incomprehensible but far more problematic. Divine folly stands for the catastrophes that cannot and should not be explained. Ascribing a certain amount of folly to YHWH is an admission of human ignorance which preserves human innocence. At the same time, divine folly stresses the urgent need for holocausts and for Job's intercession while dispensing from empty speculations as to their justification⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Job's pre-emptive holocausts⁽⁴⁵⁾ demonstrated his blameless and perfect nature (Job 1,1) but they were of no more avail against misfortune. Hence, the value of the Epilogue's holocausts has been questioned⁽⁴⁶⁾. In fact, they are not in vain. They serve the narrator's return to pious normality. The four hours it takes to read through the book's hyperbolic language⁽⁴⁷⁾ and the alternation of short prose pieces with long poems mark the Book of Job for some kind of dramatic performance. Job is pitted against other actors, each playing a well defined role and trying to assert his worth. The fact that the entire process is a performance establishes a safe distance. What is said does not necessarily reflect what the actor or the audience actually think. Hyperbole is the name of the game, caricaturing the position of the adversary is inevitable⁽⁴⁸⁾. The Epilogue's holocausts cool things down with a quick nod to approved forms of piety which clears everyone of any taint of impiety in the eyes of the audience⁽⁴⁹⁾.

When everything is said and done, YHWH's swallowing of Job (בלע Job 2,3) remains the consequence of the uttermost unreasonable divine act named folly by the Epilogue⁽⁵⁰⁾. Readers are prone to miss

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Ezekiel 14, where Job is mentioned next to Noah, presents YHWH as deceiving his own prophets: N.R. BOWEN, "Can God be Trusted? Confronting the Deceptive God", *A Feminist Companion to the Latter Prophets* (ed. BRENNER), 354-365.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Nowhere else in the Old Testament are pre-emptive holocausts offered on a regular basis: A. BRENNER, "Job the Pious", *JSOT* 43 (1989) 43.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ BRENNER, "Pious" 45.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ CLINES, "Why?", 1-20.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ GEERAERTS, "Web", 42: "... even Job himself, working himself in a frenzy of rebellion in which he challenges God to a showdown, displays an obsessive single-mindedness that would suit any of Molière's comical archetypes".

⁽⁴⁹⁾ T. STORDALEN, "Dialogue and Dialogism in the Book of Job", *JSOT* 20 (2006) 34.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ The Book of Jonah picks up the theme of the swallowing flood and mirrors Job exactly. The prophet's apparent foolish attempt to escape from the

the link between the Epilogue's explicit mention of divine folly and its implicit reference in the Prologue. The devilish rhetoric of the narrator misleads the audience in considering the question the satan puts to YHWH "Is Job fearing Elohim for naught?" (Job 1,9) as the point of the whole book. That Job is pious and therefore rich (Job 1,1-2), and that Job may become impious once poor is but a foil. Job is well aware that the wicked are doing very well (Job 21,7-26) and thus dispels all suggestions that he considers his wealth as proof of his righteousness.

It was and still is common knowledge that the wicked prospers as much as the righteous, if not more. The Book of Proverbs does claim that wisdom rewards the righteous with wealth (Prov 8,18.20-21), but who believes that the rich is necessarily righteous? It was probably obvious to all that evil often pays, and for this reason the wise elders of the Book of Proverbs concede that it is better to be poor because honest (Prov 16,19; 19,1; 28,6) and to satisfy oneself with wisdom rather than with gold (Prov 8,19). Proverbial wisdom admits that the promises of wealth and happiness are incentives to seek wisdom rather than guaranties for success.

It is thus illegitimate to conclude from a few verses in Job which applaud examples of retribution as justice in action (Job 5,3-4) that the wise elders of Israel had actually come to equate retribution and justice⁽⁵¹⁾. Such statements are caricatures, rhetorical devices that should not be taken as reflecting the positions of particular teachers or wisdom schools in Israel. Rather, it is the narrator who purposefully introduces a false problem. YHWH and the satan debate an issue which everyone knows to be a false dilemma. By this token, the entire debate in the Prologue is for nothing, but not in vain since it prepares the Epilogue's verdict. The Epilogue puts a name on the foregone link between piety and riches — folly — and pushes it in the divine sphere. That Job is twice as rich at the end does not prove that piety leads to prosperity in the end⁽⁵²⁾. The Epilogue has moved beyond reward, and it is only when folly is attributed to the friends that the red herring of the causal link between fortunes to piety remains, and that Job's partial

hand of God leads to his life-saving swallowing (Jon 2,1). Instead of divine folly, Jonah discusses the inability to comprehend or to make sense of divine compassion. At the end, divine compassion is no more predictable than divine folly.

⁽⁵¹⁾ As claimed by J.E. HARTLEY, "From Lament to Oath: A Study of Progression in the Speeches of Job", *The Book of Job* (ed. W. BEUKEN), 99.

⁽⁵²⁾ CLINES, "Why", 18.

restoration is seen as rewarding his piety rather than compensating his losses.

Once the Prologue is recognized as depicting a foolish divine act, the holocausts of the Epilogue can be appreciated as a key element of the strategy to cope with folly. In the heavens, holocausts may pacify YHWH's dangerous potentialities. On earth, they protect the wise men from accusations of impiety since tenets of wisdom including the possibility of divine folly are likely to appear as outright impiety to less enlightened minds. For folly is no divine prerogative; human folly is just as devastating. Imagine Job's predicament if his friends had been judges in a religious court. Holocausts are thus the nexus of social mores and divine law. Whatever they actually do in heaven, holocausts are a safe, orthodox and socially accepted ceremony for the reintegration of all actors into conventional standards of behaviour. Finally, the holocausts comfort Job's position as intercessor by underlining the distance between his righteousness and that of the audience, since it is not Job but his friends who are asked to offer them. What better sense of closure can be expected? ⁽⁵³⁾

7. *Folly versus Theodicy*

Taking the Epilogue seriously invalidates claims that the Book of Job is an anthology of a variety of perspectives which does not resolve the tensions among them ⁽⁵⁴⁾. Rather than merely restoring Job to his previous position, the end elevates Job to the traditional role of intercessor he holds in Ezekiel 14. Job's wealth is compensated while his physical ailments continue, creating a potential for identification for fellow sufferers.

YHWH's potential folly renders Job's intercession vital. Although the single occurrence of divine folly is safely tucked away in the long verse 8, it integrates divine folly as one of YHWH's attributes in order to account for the persistence of evil in the world ⁽⁵⁵⁾. Human wisdom needs divine folly to account for misfortunes that do not fit the pattern

⁽⁵³⁾ SPIECKERMANN, "Satanisierung", sets the end of the book at verse 7 has to consider that the book closes with unresolved ambivalence precisely because he misses the mention of folly at verse 8.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ As claimed by Y. HOFFMANN, *A Blemished Perfection*. The Book of Job in Context (JSOTSS 213; Sheffield 1996) 109-114.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ M. SNEED, "'White Trash' Wisdom: Proverbs 9 Deconstructed", *JHS* 7 (2007) available at <<http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/JHS/jhs-article.html>> demonstrates how Lady Folly enables the very existence of Lady Wisdom.

of justice and retribution. Traditional theodicy blames Job in order to justify YHWH, but Job's innocence is coming back to the fore⁽⁵⁶⁾ which forces theodicy to weaken divine power in order to preserve divine goodness⁽⁵⁷⁾. The bombastic theophany in Job 38–41 is read as a rejection of omnipotence which allows YHWH to decline responsibility for injustice⁽⁵⁸⁾. Taking divine folly seriously opens a third way which takes Job's words "you know that you can all" (Job 42,2) at face value. Creative power is not limited, it is brutal and indiscriminate. Its working out on the micro-level of individual human destinies excludes the notion of justice⁽⁵⁹⁾. Justice is replaced by folly. Divine folly avoids attributing evil directly to divine nature and puts evil out of the reach of human wisdom. Only fools try explaining folly. Theodicy is irrelevant⁽⁶⁰⁾.

The corollary of a God who assumes responsibility for evils he may commit is a human intercessor and a reinforced piety system to cope with the dark side of both divinity and humanity⁽⁶¹⁾. In this sense, the fear of the Lord mentioned in Job 28,28 attains full significance. Potential folly renders YHWH fearful indeed, in spite of his positive attributes. Downplaying the element of dread in the fear of the Lord is as unsatisfactory as the doctrine of retribution. Job's audience is spurred to offer holocausts and to seek the intercession of Job to mitigate the effects of YHWH's folly. With these ten verses, the Book of Job gets a proper sense of closure. The position delineated in the Book of Job avoids the pitfalls of the Deuteronomistic and Christian ways to cope with evil. Instead of clearing God by denying human

⁽⁵⁶⁾ J. KALMAN, *With Friends like These: Turning Points in the Jewish Exegesis of the Biblical Book of Job* (Ann Arbor 2006) 258–336.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ J.E. THIEL, *God, Evil, and Innocent Suffering* (New York 2002) 32–62.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ LACOCQUE, "Deconstruction", 96.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ "YHWH never set out to police the universe": D.J.A. CLINES, "Does the Book of Job Suggest that Suffering is not a Problem?", *Weisheit in Israel* (eds D.J.A. CLINES - H. LICHTENBERGER - H.-P. MÜLLER) (Münster 2003) 107.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ A.E. STEINMANN, "The Structure and Message of the Book of Job", VT 46 (1996) 85–100.

⁽⁶¹⁾ See U. BERGES, "Hiob in Lateinamerika. Der leidende Mensch und der aussätzige Gott", *The Book of Job* (ed. W. BEUKEN), 316. For MILES, *God*, 328, "After Job, God knows his own ambiguity as he has never known it before". Contrast with M.B. DICK, "The Neo-Assyrian Royal Hunt and Yahweh's Answer to Job", *JBL* 125 (2006) 269: "Evil is not to be attributed to God, as Job had done, nor to humans, as the three friends had insisted; there are independent evil forces, symbolized by the undomesticated animals of the wilderness, but they are held in check (מַשְׁכָּן) by Yahweh, though not annihilated".

innocence through systematic evocations of covenant violations or of the original sin, folly is shared out between humans and God. Guilt produces sinners when it is assumed or victims when it is thrown upon others. As long as he blamed God, Job positioned himself as a victim. Thanks to the realisation that God is capable of folly, the recriminatory victim fell silent. Perfect Job suffered, not as an example of conduct, but as a test enabling him to intercede for less perfect others. Suffering remains the common lot, but is it not nobler to suffer as a sage rather than as a sinner?

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SUMMARY

This paper pinpoints how divine folly and human intercession mentioned in Job 42,8 are key concepts to unravel the meaning of the Book of Job. The Epilogue does not restore Job in his former position. Job is not healed but receives a new role as intercessor on behalf of his friends and by extension on behalf of everyone less perfect than he is. Understanding misfortune as the consequence of inescapable bouts of divine folly is the Joban way to account for humanity's inability to comprehend the divinity.

Autobiografische Wir- und Er-Stellungen in den neutestamentlichen Geschichtsbüchern im Kontext der antiken Literaturgeschichte

Eine Eigenart der neutestamentlichen Geschichtsbücher besteht in der Art und Weise, wie ihre Verfasser von sich selbst erzählen (I). Es lohnt sich, ihre Art des autobiografischen Erzählens einmal umfassend im Kontext der antiken Literaturgeschichte zu beleuchten, sie also sowohl mit den literarischen Konventionen der griechisch-römischen Historiografie (II) als auch der hebräisch-alttestamentlichen Geschichtsschreibung (III) zu vergleichen. Ein solcher Vergleich dient vor allem der Interpretation der Wir-Stellen der Apostelgeschichte (IV) und der Lieblingsjünger-Texte des vierten Evangeliums (V), die in der Regel isoliert von einander betrachtet werden.

I. Autobiografisches Erzählen in den neutestamentlichen Geschichtsbüchern

Erzähltheoretisch lässt sich zwischen dem “ich” des Autors als Erzähler und dem “ich”, das der Autor als Akteur der von ihm geschilderten Handlung verwendet, unterscheiden.

(a) Einen Prolog, in dem der Autor sich in der 1. Person Singular mit seinen Lesern über den Inhalt und den Zweck seiner Arbeit verständigt, haben nur die beiden Bücher des lukanischen Doppelwerks (Lk 1,1-4; Apg 1,1-11). Eine Zweckangabe steht auch im Schlussteil des Johannesevangeliums (Joh 20,31: “damit ihr glaubt”; vgl. 19,35), allerdings ohne jedes “ich” des Autors. Bei den beiden letzten Versen des vierten Evangeliums, in denen ein “wir” (Joh 21,24) bzw. ein “ich” (Joh 21,25) erscheint, dürfte es sich um Aussagen über den Autor des Buches handeln, die nicht von diesem selbst stammen⁽¹⁾. Lediglich in zwei Evangelien meldet sich ein Autor in der 1. Person zu Wort. Lukas bedient sich in seinem Evangelienprolog (Lk 1,3: “es erschien auch mir gut”) und im Prolog der Apostelgeschichte (Apg 1,1: “Den ersten Bericht habe ich verfasst”) der 1. Person

⁽¹⁾ Vgl. M. HENGEL, *Die johanneische Frage*. Ein Lösungsversuch (WUNT 67; Tübingen 1993) 224-225.

Singular. Und Johannes verwendet zwei Mal den Wir-Stil (Joh 1,14.16: "aus seiner Fülle haben wir alle empfangen"). Dadurch agieren Lukas und Johannes als offene Erzähler ("overt narrators"), während die Erzähler des Matthäus- und des Markusevangeliums (als "covert narrators") nicht als solche in Erscheinung treten⁽²⁾.

Entsprechend unterschiedlich ist das Maß, in dem die Evangelisten ihren Lesern darüber Auskunft geben, in welchem Verhältnis sie zu dem von ihnen geschilderten Stoff stehen. Johannes lässt im Laufe seines Prologs ohne besonderen Nachdruck erkennen, dass er sich selbst zu einer größeren Gruppe von Augenzeugen rechnet (Joh 1,14: "und das Wort wurde Fleisch ... und wir haben seine Herrlichkeit angeschaut")⁽³⁾, präsentiert sich folglich als interner Erzähler ("internal narrator"). Das gilt nicht für die anderen drei Evangelisten. Lukas informiert seine Leser in seinem Evangelienprolog ausdrücklicher darüber, dass er auf die Überlieferung von Augenzeugen zurückgegriffen hat (Lk 1,2: "wie uns die überliefert haben, die ... Augenzeugen gewesen sind"). Matthäus streift die eigene Gegenwart in seiner Erzählung immerhin zweimal, allerdings in ganz unspezifischer Weise: "Deswegen ist jener Acker Blutacker genannt worden bis auf den heutigen Tag" (Mt 27,8; vgl. 28,15). Das Markusevangelium bietet keinerlei direkten Hinweis auf das zeitliche Verhältnis seines Verfassers zu seinem Stoff. Über den Lukasprolog hinausgehende direkte Quellenangaben enthält keines der Evangelien, selbst wenn einige in den Erzählungen genannte Personennamen (wie Simon von Cyrene) eine vergleichbare Funktion erfüllt haben sollten⁽⁴⁾.

(b) Den eigentlichen Erzählungen der neutestamentlichen Evangelien fehlt jedes "ich" oder "wir" des Autors als Teilnehmer an der geschilderten Handlung. Ganz anders verfuhr der Verfasser des Petrusevangeliums. Er hat sich nicht nur des Ich- und Wir-Stils bedient (Vers 26-27: "Ich aber trauerte ... und verwundeten Sinnes verbargen wir uns"), sondern die Identität des in der 1. Person Erzählenden

⁽²⁾ Zur Terminologie siehe I.J.F. DE JONG, "Narratological Theory on Narrators, Narratees, and Narrative", *Narrators, Narratees, and Narrative in Ancient Greek Literature*. Studies in Ancient Greek Narratives (Hrsg. I. De JONG – R. NÜNLIST – A. BOWIE) (Mnemosyne Supplementum 257; Leiden 2004) 1-10.

⁽³⁾ Zur Begründung dieser Deutung siehe M. RESE, "Das Selbstzeugnis des Johannesevangeliums über seinen Verfasser", *ETL* 72 (1996) 75-111, bes. 81-82.

⁽⁴⁾ Diese Möglichkeit diskutiert im Anschluss an G. Theissen u.a. jetzt R. BAUCKHAM, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* (Grand Rapids 2006) 39-66: "Names in the Gospel Tradition".

ausdrücklich enthüllt: "Ich aber, Simon Petrus, und mein Bruder Andreas nahmen unsere Netze und gingen ans Meer"⁽⁶⁾. Dagegen kennen die Ostergeschichten der kanonischen Evangelien kein "ich" des Erzählers, auch nicht in Joh 21,2-3, einer engen inhaltlichen Parallele zu der angeführten Passage aus dem Petrus-evangelium. Nur in der zweiten Hälfte der Apostelgeschichte begegnet uns in längeren Abschnitten der Erzählung, den sogenannten Wir-Stellen, die 1. Person Plural (Apg 13–28). Ob dieses "wir" autobiografisch gemeint ist, ist umstritten und soll unten im Kontext der literarischen Konventionen der Antike untersucht werden (Abschnitt IV).

Falls die Verfasser der synoptischen Evangelien in ihren Erzählungen überhaupt selbst auftreten, sprechen sie von sich nur in der 3. Person, und zwar ohne dies besonders kenntlich zu machen. Die redaktionelle Schlussnotiz behauptet, dass der in der Erzählung genannte "Jünger, den Jesus lieb hatte" (Joh 21,20), der Autor des Buches sei, "der dies geschrieben hat" (Joh 21,24). Aus dieser Perspektive hätte der vierte Evangelist von sich mehrfach in der dritten Person erzählt. Auch dieser Sachverhalt lässt sich im Rahmen der antiken Literaturgeschichte näher beleuchten (Abschnitt V).

II. Autobiografisches Erzählen in der paganen Geschichtsschreibung

Die paganen Historiker der Antike stellten ihren Werken fast immer einen Prolog voran, in dem sie ihre Leser über den Inhalt ihrer Werke informierten. Am Anfang oder Schluss des Vorworts nannte der griechische Historiker seinen Namen und seine Herkunft. Der Eröffnungssatz des Thucydides lautete: "Thucydides der Athener hat den Krieg der Peloponnesier und Athener beschrieben"⁽⁶⁾. Ähnlich sind die meisten antiken Historiker verfahren⁽⁷⁾.

Nachdem sie zu Beginn ihrer Werke bzw. in ihren Prologen (in der

⁽⁶⁾ EvPetr 60; zitiert nach C. Maurer in *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen* (Hrsg. W. SCHNEEMELCHER) (Tübingen 1990) I, 188. Zu den Verfasserangaben in den neutestamentlichen Apokryphen vgl. K. ALAND, "Noch einmal: Das Problem der Anonymität und Pseudonymität in der christlichen Literatur der ersten beiden Jahrhunderte", *JAC.E* 8 (1980) 121–139, bes. 127–129.

⁽⁶⁾ I 1,1 ([ed. H.S. JONES] [Oxford 1900], revised by J.E. Powell 1942).

⁽⁷⁾ E. SCHMALZRIEDT, *ΠΕΡΙ ΦΥΣΕΩΣ*. Zur Frühgeschichte der Buchtitel (München 1970) 32–34; D. EARL, "Prolog-Form in Ancient Greek Historiography", *ANRW* I.2 (1972) 842–849.

3. Person) ihren Namen genannt hatten, gingen die griechischen Geschichtsschreiber sehr bald in die 1. Person über. Schon Hekataios ist in seinem Eröffnungsabschnitt so verfahren⁽⁸⁾. Herodot bediente sich ebenfalls schon bei der ersten dem Buchanfang folgenden Reflexion über die historische Qualität seiner Quellen und den Aufbau seiner Erzählung der 1. Person (I 5,3-4) und hat von da an an Hunderten von Stellen derartige Reflexionen und Erklärungen im Ich-Stil eingefügt, in denen er im Anschluss an ein *δοκέω* (und ähnliche Verben) beispielsweise über den Wahrheitsgehalt seiner Gewährsleute bzw. seines Berichts reflektierte⁽⁹⁾. Wie seine vielen Nachfolger trat er als offener Erzähler in Erscheinung⁽¹⁰⁾. Auch Thucydides wechselte im Anschluss an die einleitenden Sätze seines Werkes, in denen er von sich in der 3. Person spricht (I 1,1), sofort in den Ich-Stil, um von seiner schriftstellerischen Tätigkeit zu berichten (I 1,2). In der 1. Person hat er dann auch das sogenannte Methodenkapitel (I 20-22) und — vom Einleitungssatz abgesehen — einen Exkurs über sein zeitliches Verhältnis zum Krieg und seine Erzählweise (V 26) formuliert. Insgesamt unterbricht das "ich" des Autors das Werk des Thucydides allerdings weitaus seltener als bei Herodot. Wie aber haben pagane Historiker von ihrer eigenen Beteiligung an der von ihnen geschilderten Geschichte gesprochen?

1. *Der autobiografische Er-Stil in der griechischen Geschichtsschreibung*

Antike Geschichtsschreiber schrieben häufig Gegenwartsgeschichte. Daher behandelten sie nicht selten als interne Erzähler Ereignisse, die sie nicht nur miterlebt hatten, sondern an denen sie als Akteure beteiligt gewesen waren. In ihren autobiografischen Passagen berichteten sie jedoch in der Regel nicht im Ich-Stil, sondern in der 3. Person. So ist schon Thucydides in seinem vierten Buch verfahren: Die Gegner des Verrats sandten "zu dem anderen Feldherrn für Thrakien, Thucydides, Sohn des Oloros, der dies beschrieben hat"⁽¹¹⁾. Polybios ist der einzige antike Historiker, der sich, nachdem er sich in

⁽⁸⁾ FGH 1, F 1.

⁽⁹⁾ Z.B. in II 123,1. Für eine Analyse der verschiedenen Arten von Zwischenbemerkungen Herodots in der 1. Person siehe C. DEWALD, "Narrative Surface and Authorial Voice in Herodotus' Histories", *Arethusa* 20 (1987) 149-167.

⁽¹⁰⁾ I.J.F. DE JONG, "Herodotus", *Narrators, Narratees, and Narrative*, 101-114.

⁽¹¹⁾ IV 104,4 (ed. JONES [Oxford 1900]).

den Büchern I-XXXVI regelmäßig in der 3. Person genannt hat, explizit zu dieser Ausdrucksweise geäußert hat:

Man soll sich nicht wundern, wenn wir uns mal mit unserem normalen Namen bezeichnen, mal mit den allgemeinen Ausdrücken, so wie 'nachdem ich das gesagt hatte' oder auch 'nachdem wir zugestimmt hatten'. Denn da wir tief in die Ereignisse verflochten waren, die im Folgenden berichtet werden sollen, ist es notwendig, die Selbstbenennungen zu verändern, damit wir weder durch die häufige Wiederholung des (eigenen) Namens Anstoß erregen noch dadurch, dass wir ständig 'von mir' oder 'durch mich' sagen, unbemerkt in eine gewöhnliche Ausdrucksweise verfallen, sondern damit wir vielmehr, indem wir alle diese Möglichkeiten ausschöpfen und abwechselnd die jeweils passende wählen, so weit wie möglich dem Vorwurf entgehen, (ständig) von der eigenen Person zu sprechen; denn eine solche Redeweise ist natürlich einerseits inakzeptabel, andererseits aber häufig notwendig, da der Stoff unmöglich anders präsentiert werden kann ... ⁽¹²⁾.

Polybios hielt sich demzufolge spätestens ab Buch XXXVI nicht mehr an die Regel, nur im Prolog und vergleichbaren schriftstellerischen Bemerkungen "ich" zu sagen und in den autobiografischen Abschnitten die 3. Person zu verwenden. Indem er so ausdrücklich begründete, warum er von dieser Praxis abwich, bestätigt er indirekt die Beobachtung, dass seine Leser erwarteten, die autobiografischen Abschnitte eines Geschichtswerks würden im Er-Stil formuliert ⁽¹³⁾.

Auch Josephus hat in seinem *Bellum Judaicum*, dem Beispiel des Thucydides folgend, im Er-Stil von den Taten des "Josephus" berichtet. In den parallelen Abschnitten seiner Autobiografie hat er die 3. Person später in die 1. Person umgewandelt. Für die Geschichtsschreibung erschien ihm, wie seinen Vorbildern, der Ich-Stil ungeeignet ⁽¹⁴⁾.

⁽¹²⁾ XXXVI 12,1-5 (IV 452,1-19; T. Büttner-Wobst [Leipzig 1889-1914], repr. Stuttgart 1964-1967).

⁽¹³⁾ J.M. MARINCOLA, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge 1999) 175-216: "The historian's deeds", hier 188-192.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Vgl. M. HIRSCHBERGER, "Historiographie im Zwiespalt – Iosephos' Darstellung seiner selbst im Ἰουδαϊκὸς Πόλεμος", *Antike Autobiographie. Werke – Epochen – Gattungen* (Hrsg. M. REICHEL) (Köln 2005) 143-179. Wichtige Textbeispiele zum autobiografischen Er-Stil bei Thucydides, Polybios und Josephus (samt einer englischen Übersetzung) hat neuerdings W.S. CAMPBELL, *The "We" Passages in the Acts of the Apostles. The Narrator as Narrative Character* (Studies in Biblical Literature 14; Atlanta, GA 2007) 99-115 zusammengestellt.

Die 3. Person diene in keinem der genannten Fälle dazu, die Teilnahme des Autors an den von ihm geschilderten Vorgängen zu verschleiern. Auch dies zeigt das Beispiel des Thucydides, der seine soeben zitierte Selbsteinführung im Er-Stil mit der Angabe verbunden hat, der in der 3. Person genannte Thucydides sei derjenige, „der dies beschrieben hat“ (IV 104,4).

2. Der autobiografische Ich-Stil in der römischen Geschichtsschreibung

Allerdings gibt es in der paganen Geschichtsschreibung der Antike eine Reihe bemerkenswerter Ausnahmen. Einige Historiker fühlten sich dem erwähnten Stilideal nicht verpflichtet. Auf Velleius Paterculus, Dio Cassius und Ammianus Marcellinus hat bereits E. Norden hingewiesen⁽¹⁵⁾. J. M. Marincola hat diese Liste um die Namen Philochorus, Cato und Appian erweitert⁽¹⁶⁾. Der römische Geschichtsschreiber Velleius Paterculus (geb. 20 v. Chr.) hat in seinem zweibändigen Werk über die Geschichte Roms an einigen Stellen durch die Verwendung der 1. Person angezeigt, an welchen kriegesischen Operationen an der römischen Nordgrenze er in den Jahren 6-9 n. Chr. als Offizier selbst beteiligt war: „Ich wurde als sein (d. h. des Augustus) Legat zu ihm (d. i. Tiberius) gesandt. Was für feindliche Schlachtreihen haben wir im ersten Jahr gesehen!“⁽¹⁷⁾. Ähnlich ist der Historiker Cassius Dio (um 155-235 n. Chr.) in seiner griechisch verfassten *Römischen Geschichte* verfahren, indem er sich ausgiebig der Personalpronomen ἐγώ und ἡμεῖς bediente. Ein drittes Beispiel stellen die *Res Gestae* des Ammianus Marcellinus (um 330-395 n. Chr.) dar, das letzte große Geschichtswerk der Antike. Auch darin finden sich nicht nur knappe Angaben zur Person des Autors (IV 9,1 u.ö.), sondern darüber hinaus, vor allem in den Büchern XVIII-

⁽¹⁵⁾ *Agnostos Theos*. Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede (1923; Darmstadt 1956) 316-327: „Kombination von Autopsiebericht und Referat“.

⁽¹⁶⁾ *Authority and Tradition*, 199-204. Campbell hat den autobiografischen Ich-Stil in seiner Monografie *The "We" Passages in the Acts of the Apostles* nicht berücksichtigt.

⁽¹⁷⁾ II 111,4 (Velleius Paterculus, *Historiarum Libri Duo* [ed. W.S. WATT] [Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana; Stuttgart – Leipzig 1998] 76, 16-18). Zu den übrigen Autopsieangaben siehe U. SCHMITZER, *Velleius Paterculus und das Interesse an der Geschichte im Zeitalter des Tiberius* (BKAW 2/107; Heidelberg 2000) 263-269: „Velleius' literarhistorische Position im Kontext der antiken Diskussion um die Zeitgeschichte“.

XIX, lange Erlebnisberichte im Wir-Stil⁽¹⁸⁾. Es fällt auf, dass vor allem römische Geschichtsschreiber von ihrer Beteiligung an den dargestellten Ereignissen in der 1. Person berichtet haben⁽¹⁹⁾.

3. Gründe für den autobiografischen Er-Stil

Für den Sachverhalt, dass die griechischen Geschichtsschreiber über ihre Beteiligung an den in ihren Werken geschilderten Ereignissen in aller Regel im Er-Stil berichtet haben, bietet die Althilologie zwei Erklärungen an.

(1) Zum einen kann man darauf verweisen, dass u. a. Quintilian den Rednern ausführlich eingeschärft hat, es sei "alles Großtun mit der eigenen Person ein Fehler"⁽²⁰⁾. In dieselbe Richtung weisen die Empfehlungen, die Plutarch in seiner Schrift *De laude ipsius* für den Fall formuliert hat, dass sich die περιαιτολογία bzw. das Eigenlob nicht vermeiden lasse⁽²¹⁾. In vergleichbarer Weise könnte das autobiografische "ich" des Historikers als Selbstlob empfunden worden sein⁽²²⁾. Das könnte auch eine Aussage des Cicero nahelegen, der in einem seiner Briefe ankündigte: Ich werde "mich vielleicht gezwungen sehen, etwas zu tun, was von manchen Seiten oft getadelt wird: ich werde selbst über mich schreiben, und das doch nach dem Vorbild vieler erlauchter Männer"⁽²³⁾. Auf diesem Hintergrund lässt sich vermuten, die griechischen Historiker hätten von sich in der 3. Person gesprochen, um den Eindruck des Eigenlobs so weit wie möglich zu vermeiden und ihre Erzählungen möglichst objektiv erscheinen zu lassen⁽²⁴⁾.

Fraglich ist allerdings, ob die Gefahr des autobiografischen

⁽¹⁸⁾ W. SEYFRATH, *Ammianus Marcellinus*. Römische Geschichte (SQAW 21; Berlin 1970) I, 27-29; vgl. K. ROSEN, *Ammianus Marcellinus* (EdF 183; Darmstadt 1982) 77-78.

⁽¹⁹⁾ So MARINCOLA, *Authority and Tradition*, 204-205.

⁽²⁰⁾ *Institutio Oratoria* XI 1,15; zitiert nach H. RAHN (Hrsg.), *Markus Fabius Quintilian*. Ausbildung des Redners (TzF 3; Darmstadt 1988) 550-551.

⁽²¹⁾ Siehe dazu die Analyse von H.G. INGENKAMP, *Plutarchs Schriften über die Heilung der Seele* (Hyp. 34; Göttingen 1971) 62-69.

⁽²²⁾ Vgl. MARINCOLA, *Authority and Tradition*, 176-177.

⁽²³⁾ *Epistulae ad Familiares* V, 12,8-9 ([ed. by D.R. SHACKLETON BAILEY] [Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 16; Cambridge 1977] 147,3-5).

⁽²⁴⁾ In diesem Sinne ließe sich auch der Selbstbericht des Paulus deuten, den er in 2 Kor 12,1-7 in der 3. Person formuliert hat: "Ich weiß von einem Menschen in Christus, dass er vor vierzehn Jahren ... bis in den dritten Himmel entrückt wurde ...".

Selbstlobs etwa im Fall des Thucydides, der in seinem umfangreichen Werk nur sehr kurz auftritt, überhaupt bestand bzw. empfunden wurde. Vor allem aber lässt sich nur schwer einsehen, dass die Leserschaft einem Historiker eine selbstherrliche Darstellung seiner eigenen Person nachgesehen haben sollte, sobald er diese in der 3. Person darbot.

(2) Ein zweiter Erklärungsansatz lautet, die griechische Geschichtsschreibung habe sich, indem sie die Ich-Erzählung des Historikers vermied, an Homer orientiert. In den Epen Homers bedient sich der Erzähler jeweils im Proömium kurz der 1. Person ("Den Mann, nenne mir, Muse, den vielgewandten"), verzichtet für den Rest seines Werkes jedoch fast vollständig auf jedes "ich". Und da der Autor als externer Erzähler agiert, findet sich an keiner Stelle der *Ilias* und der *Odyssee* eine Ich-Erzählung⁽²⁵⁾. An dieser als vorbildlich empfundenen Erzählweise habe Thucydides sich orientiert und damit vermeiden wollen, dass sich sein Geschichtswerk wie ein gewöhnlicher, in der 1. Person verfasster Reisebericht las. Der 3. Person habe er sich in "imitation of Homer and his third person narrative" bedient⁽²⁶⁾.

Für diese Deutung spricht, dass das Vorbild Homers nachweislich auch in anderer Hinsicht auf den Stil der griechischen Geschichtsschreibung eingewirkt hat⁽²⁷⁾. Dessen war man sich bereits in der Antike bewusst. So riet Lucian dem Historiker im Blick auf stilistische Aspekte: Verfahre so "wie du es den ... Homer tun siehst"⁽²⁸⁾. Wahrscheinlich haben die griechischen Historiker neben dem Er-Stil auch das Mittel der Redewiedergabe aus dem homerischen Epos übernommen⁽²⁹⁾. In diesem Fall hätten römische Historiker wie Cassius Dio und Ammianus Marcellinus die autobiografische Erzählung in der 3. Person aufgegeben, weil ihnen die Unmittelbarkeit der autobiografischen Abschnitte ihrer Werke wichtiger war als die traditionelle Nachahmung einer an Homer orientierten Ausdrucksweise.

⁽²⁵⁾ DE JONG, "Homer", *Narrators, Narratees, and Narrative*, 13-24.

⁽²⁶⁾ MARINCOLA, *Authority and Tradition*, 182-184.

⁽²⁷⁾ H. STRASBURGER, *Homer und die Geschichtsschreibung* (SHAW.PH; Heidelberg 1972) 39.

⁽²⁸⁾ *De historia conscribenda* 57 ([ed. M.D. MACLEOD] [OCT; Oxford 1972-1987] III, 317, 24).

⁽²⁹⁾ Dies habe ich an anderer Stelle zu zeigen versucht: "Zu Funktion und Authentizität der oratio recta. Hebräische und griechische Geschichtsschreibung im Vergleich", ZAW 115 (2003) 586-607.

III. Autobiografisches Erzählen in der hebräischen Geschichtsschreibung

Anders als die griechischen und römischen sind die hebräischen Historiker verfahren.

(a) Ihre Geschichtsbücher wurden nicht mit einer Vorrede ausgestattet, die über ihren Zweck und die benutzten Quellen informierte. Außer auf einen Prolog verzichtete die hebräische Geschichtsschreibung von der Genesis bis zu den Königebüchern ganz auf über Zweck und Methode reflektierende Aussagen in der 1. Person⁽³⁰⁾. Dieses alttestamentlichen Stils bediente sich auch noch das 1. Makkabäerbuch. Die hebräischen Historiker verzichteten auch vollständig auf Angaben über die Qualität ihrer Quellen oder den Aufbau ihrer Erzählungen. Auskunft über die Existenz von Quellschriften geben lediglich die verstreuten Hinweise auf das "Buch der Geschichte Salomos" (1 Kön 11,41) usw.

Einer der wenigen Bezüge zur Gegenwart der Autoren findet sich in der knappen Wendung, ein geschilderter Sachverhalt bestehe "bis auf diesen/den heutigen Tag"⁽³¹⁾. "Vorzeiten sagte man in Israel, wenn man ging, Gott zu befragen: Kommt und lasst uns zum Seher gehen! Denn den man heute Prophet nennt, nannte man früher Seher" (1 Sam 9,9). Darüber hinaus haben die alttestamentlichen Historiker ihre Erzählungen hin und wieder durch etwas ausführlichere erklärende und wertende Zwischenbemerkungen unterbrochen. "In den Augen des Herrn aber war die Sache böse, die David getan hatte" (2 Sam 11,27). Auch diese zurückhaltenden Zwischenbemerkungen der Erzähler sind allerdings selten, denn "the narrative will be more vivid, dramatic, gripping and realistic the less the narrator's existence is felt, the less aware we are of the fact that someone is mediating between us and the events"⁽³²⁾.

(b) Auch von einer Beteiligung der Autoren an den von ihnen geschilderten Ereignissen ist in den meisten Büchern keine Rede. Weder im Pentateuch, noch in den Büchern Josua, Richter und Ruth, noch in den Könige- und Chronikbüchern tritt ein Ich-Erzähler auf. Eine Ausnahme bilden die Bücher Esra und Nehemia, in denen

⁽³⁰⁾ S. BAR-EFRAT, *Narrative Art in the Bible* (JSOTSS 70 / BiLiSe 17; Sheffield 1989) 23-45: "The Narrator's Manifestation", hier 23-24.

⁽³¹⁾ Gen 19,37; Ex 10,6 u.ö.

⁽³²⁾ BAR-EFRAT, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 31.

streckenweise ein Ich-Erzähler das Wort ergreift. Allerdings muss dieser nicht mit dem jeweiligen Verfasser des Gesamtwerks identifiziert werden⁽³³⁾.

Weil alle alttestamentlichen Geschichtsbücher anonym überliefert sind, lässt keines von ihnen erkennen, ob einer der Verfasser sich selbst in der 3. Person nennt. Dies gilt auch für den Pentateuch, der Mose an keiner Stelle als Autor bezeichnet. Mose gilt lediglich als Vermittler der von Gott stammenden Gesetze⁽³⁴⁾, die nur Teile des Pentateuch ausmachen. In frühjüdischer Zeit scheint Mose dann sehr weitgehend als Verfasser des gesamten Pentateuch angesehen worden zu sein⁽³⁵⁾, ausgenommen allenfalls der Schlussabschnitt über seinen Tod⁽³⁶⁾. Unter dieser Voraussetzung musste Mose als ein Autor gelten, der sich selbst in seinem Geschichtswerk in der 3. Person auftreten ließ. In entsprechender Weise sahen frühjüdische Leser Esra als Autor des Esrabuches an⁽³⁷⁾. Aufgrund dieses Vorverständnisses lasen sie die Abschnitte, in denen der Name Esra auftaucht (Esra 7 und 10), als Selbstbericht des Autors in der 3. Person⁽³⁸⁾.

IV. Autobiografisches Erzählen in der Apostelgeschichte

Auf dem bisher skizzierten Hintergrund des autobiografischen Erzählens in der griechisch-römischen und der hebräisch-alttestamentlichen Geschichtsschreibung gewinnen die Wir-Stellen der Apostelgeschichte ihr besonderes Profil. Von den uns zugänglichen antiken Interpreten der Apostelgeschichte sind sie als autobiografische Notizen des Buchautors gedeutet worden. Dies zeigt bereits eine Aussage des Irenäus von Lyon, der um 180 n. Chr. schrieb:

⁽³³⁾ Esr 7–9; Neh 1–7, 10–13. J. BECKER, *Der Ich-Bericht des Nehemiabuches als chronistische Gestaltung* (FzB 87; Würzburg 1998) bestreitet die Mehrheitsmeinung, dass die in der 1. Person formulierten Abschnitte (Neh 1,1–7,5; 12,31–43; 13,4–31) aus einer Denkschrift Nehemias stammen dürften.

⁽³⁴⁾ Ex 24,1–4; 25,1–2; 31,12–13; Lev 1,1–2; 4,1 u.ö.

⁽³⁵⁾ Josephus, *Antiquitates* IV 326: "Er hat von sich selbst in den heiligen Büchern geschrieben, dass er starb" ([ed. B. NIESE] [Berlin 1885–1895] I, 290,1); vgl. I pr. 18–26; Philo, *De vita Mosis* I, 4; II, 51.291; Y. AMIR, "Mose als Verfasser der Tora bei Philon", in: *Die hellenistische Gestalt des Judentums bei Philon von Alexandrien* (FJCD 5; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1983) 77–106.

⁽³⁶⁾ b BB 14b.15a; b Men 30a.

⁽³⁷⁾ b BB 15a.

⁽³⁸⁾ Vgl. Gregor, *Moralia in Iob* pr. I, 3: "In der Heiligen Schrift ist es Sitte, dass die Autoren darin so von sich sprechen als sprächen sie von anderen" (CCL 143, 9,37–38 Adriaen).

“Dieser Lukas war von Paulus unzertrennlich und sein Mitarbeiter am Evangelium, wie er selbst deutlich macht, und zwar nicht, um sich aufzuspielen, sondern von der Wahrheit gedrängt”. Denn zu Beginn der zweiten Missionsreise, “da, sagt er, ‘kamen wir nach Troas’ (Apg 16,8). Und als Paulus im Traum einen Mann aus Mazedonien gesehen hatte ..., da, sagt er, ‘hatten wir das Verlangen, sofort nach Mazedonien aufzubrechen, da uns klar war, dass der Herr uns rief, ihnen das Evangelium zu bringen. Wir segelten also von Troas ab mit Kurs auf Samothrake’ (Apg 16,10-11) ...”⁽³⁹⁾.

1. Alternativen zur autobiografischen Deutung der Wir-Stellen

Eine Reihe von Exegeten hält diese Auffassung der Wir-Stellen für ein frühes Missverständnis, hat die autobiografische Deutung aufgegeben und alternative Interpretationsansätze entwickelt.

(1) Die literarkritische Deutung nahm ihren Anfang mit B.L. Koenigsmann, der 1798 den Evangelienprolog (Lk 1,1-4) auch auf die Apostelgeschichte bezog und ihm entnahm, Lukas habe auch für sein zweites Buch nicht auf eigene Augenzeugenerinnerungen zurückgreifen können. Er habe seinen eigenen Worten zufolge auch für die Apostelgeschichte nur schriftliche Quellen verwendet (die von den Aposteln und ihren Schülern stammten). Aus diesem Grund konnten nach Koenigsmann auch die Wir-Stellen nicht vom Paulusbegleiter Lukas verfasst sein. Es handele sich bei den in der 1. Person Plural gehaltenen Passagen der Apostelgeschichte folglich um von einem Reisebegleiter des Paulus verfasste Quellenstücke. Diese habe Lukas so treu wiedergeben wollen, dass er sogar das “wir” des Verfassers beibehalten habe, statt es in die 3. Person (“sie”) umzuwandeln. F.D.E. Schleiermacher hat sich dieser Deutung des Lukasprologs angeschlossen und hielt Timotheus für einen möglichen Verfasser der Wir-Stücke. Andere dachten an Epaphroditus, Silas oder Titus⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Ganz abgesehen von Koenigsmanns Prologdeutung sind bis heute aus der griechisch-römischen Literatur keine überzeugenden Parallelen dafür angeführt worden, dass ein Historiker seinem Werk einen schriftlichen Augenzeugenbericht einverleibt hat, ohne dessen Ich-Stil in die 3. Person umzuwandeln⁽⁴¹⁾. Darüber hinaus lassen sich keinerlei Stilunterschiede zwischen den Wir-Stellen und dem übrigen Text der

⁽³⁹⁾ *Adversus haereses* III, 14,1; zitiert nach N. BROX, *FC* 8/3, 166-169.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Siehe zur Forschungsgeschichte C.-J. THORNTON, *Der Zeuge des Zeugen*. Lukas als Historiker der Paulusreisen (WUNT 56; Tübingen 1991) 93-98.

⁽⁴¹⁾ THORNTON, *Zeuge des Zeugen*, 98-104; vgl. CAMPBELL, *The “We” Passages*, 88.

Apostelgeschichte nachweisen⁽⁴²⁾. Auch diese Beobachtung spricht deutlich gegen die These, bei den Wir-Stellen handle es sich um von Lukas unbearbeitet übernommene Quellenstücke.

(2) Aufgrund derartiger Erwägungen haben andere Forscher die lukanische Herkunft der Wir-Stellen anerkannt und zu deren Deutung auf literarische Konventionen der paganen Erzählliteratur verwiesen. Ein Vorschlag lautet, es habe zu den Konventionen antiker Seereiseberichte gehört, diese in der 1. Person zu schildern⁽⁴³⁾. Gegen diese These ist jedoch mit Recht eingewandt worden, dass zahlreiche Seereiseberichte der griechisch-römischen Literatur sich der 3. Person bedienen. Solche Seereiseberichte in der 3. Person finden sich u. a. in den Werken von Arrian, Herodot, Polybios oder Tacitus⁽⁴⁴⁾. Und auch in der Apostelgeschichte selbst gibt es Seereiseberichte in der 3. Person: "Sie nun, ausgesandt von dem Heiligen Geist, gingen hinab nach Seleucia, und von dort segelten sie nach Cypern" (Apg 13,4)⁽⁴⁵⁾. Dasselbe gilt für die Evangelien: "Und sie fuhren nach der Landschaft der Gerasener, die Galiläa gegenüber liegt" (Lk 8,26). Aus diesen Gründen hat dieser Vorschlag wenig Zustimmung gefunden.

Ein ähnlicher Deutungsansatz lautet, Lukas habe durch das "wir" in den Abschnitten über die paulinischen Seereisen beabsichtigt, "auf seine Eigenschaft als erprobter Seefahrer aufmerksam zu machen". Mit der 1. Person habe er signalisieren wollen, dass er von den Dingen, über die er schrieb, ganz wie es von einem hellenistischen Historiker gefordert wurde, aus eigener Erfahrung etwas verstand. Allerdings sind, wie Plümacher selbst einräumt, dafür, dass der Autor auf diesen Erfahrungsschatz durch ein "wir" hingewiesen hat, "Muster, nach denen Lk sich hätte richten können, nicht bekannt"⁽⁴⁶⁾.

⁽⁴²⁾ A. HARNACK, *Neue Untersuchungen zur Apostelgeschichte und zur Abfassungszeit der synoptischen Evangelien*. Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Neue Testament IV (Leipzig 1911) 1-15; J. WEHNERT, *Die Wir-Passagen der Apostelgeschichte*. Ein lukanisches Stilmittel aus jüdischer Tradition (GTA 40; Göttingen 1989) 125-130.

⁽⁴³⁾ So V.K. ROBBINS, "By Land and By Sea: The We-Passages and Ancient Sea Voyages", *Perspectives on Luke-Acts* (Hrsg. C.H. TALBERT) (Danville 1978) 215-242.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ S.M. PRAEDER, "The Problem of the First Person Narration in Acts", *NT* 29 (1987) 210-214.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Als weitere Stellen nennt A.J.M. WEDDERBURN, "The 'We'-Passages in Acts: On the Horns of a Dilemma", *ZNW* 93 (2002) 83: Apg 13,13, 14,26; 15,40; 18,18-21.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ E. PLÜMACHER, "Wirklichkeitserfahrung und Geschichtsschreibung bei Lukas. Erwägungen zu den Wir-Stücken der Apostelgeschichte", *ZNW* 68 (1977) 21-22.

Die jüngste Variante dieses Deutungsansatzes stammt von W.S. Campbell. Er interpretiert die lukanischen Wir-Stellen in Anlehnung an die schriftstellerischen Reflexionen, die Thucydides, Polybius und Josephus in der 1. Person angestellt haben (s.o.). Während es in Act 9-15 die Rolle des Barnabas gewesen sei, zu unterstreichen und zu verteidigen, dass Paulus in Übereinstimmung mit dem Willen Gottes agiert, habe diese Funktion ab Act 16 der anonyme Wir-Erzähler übernommen. Mit diesem "wir" habe der Verfasser der Apostelgeschichte keine Augenzeugenschaft beanspruchen wollen, sondern seine genaue Kenntnis des Paulus und seiner Geschichte angezeigt (und sich mit seinen Lesern zusammengeschlossen)⁽⁴⁷⁾. Diese Deutung leidet daran, dass sie in den schriftstellerischen Reflexionen der genannten Historiker keine echte Analogie hat. Wo Thucydides, Polybius und Josephus in der 1. Person auch eine genaue Kenntnis ihres Gegenstandes beansprucht haben, taten sie dies explizit und unmissverständlich. Und sie konnten in der 1. Person auch das genaue Gegenteil behaupten: "Wegen des großen zeitlichen Abstands war ich nicht in der Lage, die früheren Ereignisse und die fernere Vergangenheit genau in Erfahrung zu bringen"⁽⁴⁸⁾.

(3) Einen wieder anderen Weg hat J. Wehnert eingeschlagen, indem er die Wir-Stellen der Apostelgeschichte als literarische Konvention, die aus der alttestamentlichen Erzählliteratur stammt, gedeutet hat. Der alttestamentliche Autor des Danielbuchs habe seine Hauptfigur phasenweise im Ich-Stil reden lassen, um so seine Leser darauf hinzuweisen, dass er "auf authentisches Material seines Protagonisten zurückgreifen" konnte. In Anlehnung an diesen "heiligen Stil" habe der frühjüdische Acta-Verfasser seinen Lesern mit seinen Wir-Stellen signalisieren wollen, dass er die (mündlichen) Nachrichten eines Paulusbegleiters (namens Silas) verarbeitet habe⁽⁴⁹⁾.

Diese These ruft zunächst die Frage hervor, warum der Verfasser des lukanischen Doppelwerks im Evangelium (und ebenso in Apg 1-12) kein einziges Mal mit derselben literarischen Konvention wie in den Wir-Stellen angezeigt hat, dass er auf authentische Zeugenberichte von Zeitgenossen Jesu zurückgreifen konnte. Immerhin behauptet er im Evangelienprolog, seinen Evangelienstoff weitgehend aus Augenzeugenberichten geschöpft zu haben (Lk 1,1-4). Darüber hinaus

⁽⁴⁷⁾ CAMPBELL, *The "We" Passages*, 12-13, 49-85, 90-91.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Thucydides, I, 2 ([ed. JONES] [Oxford 1900]).

⁽⁴⁹⁾ WEHNERT, *Wir-Passagen*, 143-188.

bieten die alttestamentlichen Ich-Stellen keine echte Parallele zu den Wir-Stellen der Apostelgeschichte. Zum einen reden in den alttestamentlichen Büchern eindeutig die namentlich benannten Hauptpersonen in der 1. Person, während dies in der Apostelgeschichte eine Randfigur täte, deren Identität unklar bleibt. Wehnert muss einräumen, dass es dafür „aller bisherigen Erkenntnis nach kein literarisches Vorbild“ gibt⁽⁵⁰⁾. Weiterhin fehlt den alttestamentlichen Büchern ein Vorwort, in denen sich der Autor bereits in der 1. Person zu Wort gemeldet hat. In der Apostelgeschichte sind die Aussagen in der 1. Person Plural durch die 1. Person Singular im Prolog (Apg 1,1) bereits als Aussagen des Autors definiert. Dass sich das „ich“ des Prologs nicht mit dem „wir“ der Erzählung überschneidet, wird nirgends angedeutet. Daher stellt auch der von Wehnert herangezogene Sirachprolog⁽⁵¹⁾ keine Analogie dar. Denn dieser stammt vom griechischen Übersetzer des Buches, der sich ausdrücklich vom Verfasser des Originalwerkes unterscheidet.

Vor allem aber wird im Danielbuch, Wehnerts wichtigstem Belegtext für das von ihm identifizierte jüdische Stilmittel, der Übergang von der 3. zur 1. Person mit einer Zitateinleitung hergestellt (Dan 7,1-2): „Im ersten Jahr Belsazars, des Königs von Babel, sah Daniel einen Traum und Gesichte seines Hauptes auf seinem Lager. Dann schrieb er den Traum auf, die Summe der Ereignisse berichtete er. Daniel fing an und sprach: Ich schaute in meinem Gesicht in der Nacht ...“. Innerhalb der Wir-Stellen des Danielbuchs wird immer wieder durch ein ἐγὼ Δανιηλ (Dan 8,15 u.ö.) ausdrücklich verdeutlicht, wie der Name des Sprechers lautet. Eine entsprechende Überleitung, durch die der Autor seinen Lesern unmissverständlich signalisieren würde, dass in der 1. Person ein anderer als der Buchautor redet, fehlt in Apg 16, 20 und 27. Und ein „ich Silas“ findet sich in keiner einzigen Wir-Stelle des lukanischen Werkes. Auch die hebräische Erzählliteratur stellt keine literarische Konvention bereit, die eine Alternative zur autobiografischen Deutung der lukanischen Wir-Stellen ermöglichen könnte⁽⁵²⁾.

Die literaturgeschichtlich nahe liegendste Deutung der Wir-Stellen ist nach wie vor die autobiografische des Irenäus. Der Einwand, diese Deutung entspräche nicht den literarischen Konventionen der antiken

⁽⁵⁰⁾ *Wir-Passagen*, 186.

⁽⁵¹⁾ *Wir-Passagen*, 136-139.

⁽⁵²⁾ Vgl. THORNTON, *Zeuge des Zeugen*, 107-116.

Literatur⁽⁵³⁾, trifft nicht zu. Für die Interpretation des Irenäus lassen sich mehrere Analogien aus der paganen Geschichtsschreibung anführen. So wie die römischen Historiker Velleius Paterculus, Dio Cassius und Ammianus Marcellinus in ihren Erzählungen in die 1. Person übergegangen sind, wenn sie an den geschilderten Ereignissen selbst beteiligt waren (s.o.), hat auch Lukas nichts anderes sagen wollen, als dass er an einigen Abschnitten der paulinischen Missionsreisen persönlich beteiligt gewesen ist. Speziell die Wir-Berichte des Ammianus Marcellinus "schieben sich in die Referate von Ereignissen, an denen er nicht beteiligt war, genau so ein, wie in den Acta"⁽⁵⁴⁾. Aus dieser Übereinstimmung könnte man ableiten, Lukas habe mit seinen Wir-Stellen bewusst römischen Vorbildern folgen wollen⁽⁵⁵⁾. Allerdings unterscheidet sich die Art, wie Lukas sich der 1. Person bedient, in doppelter Weise vom Ich-Stil der römischen Historiker.

2. Die Anonymität des Wir-Erzählers in den Acta

Erstens bleibt der Autor des lukanischen Doppelwerkes, den wir Lukas nennen, obwohl er phasenweise autobiografisch in der 1. Person schreibt, anonym. Er hat weder in seinen Prologen, noch in den Titeln seines Werkes, noch in der Erzählung ein einziges Mal seinen Namen genannt⁽⁵⁶⁾. Dagegen nannten alle oben erwähnten paganen Geschichtsschreiber, die in ihren Werken als Ich-Erzähler auftraten, ihre Namen. W.S. Campbell hat die Vertreter einer autobiografischen Interpretation der Wir-Stellen zu Recht aufgefordert, diesem

⁽⁵³⁾ So CAMPBELL, *The "We" Passages*, 9-10.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ NORDEN, *Agnostos Theos*, 322; vgl. E. MEYER, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums* (Stuttgart 1923) III, 19-21; M. REISER, *Sprache und literarische Formen des Neuen Testaments*. Eine Einführung (UTB 2197; Paderborn 2001) 113-114.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ THORNTON, *Zeuge des Zeugen*, 190-191.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Zur Anonymität der neutestamentlichen Geschichtsbücher siehe besonders M. WOLTER, "Die anonymen Schriften des Neuen Testaments. Annäherungsversuch an ein literarisches Phänomen", *ZNW* 79 (1988) 1-16. Seiner Deutung hat sich J. ZMIJEWSKI, "Anonymität", *LTK* (1993) I, 702-704, angeschlossen. Für weitere Beobachtungen zu diesem weithin vernachlässigten Thema siehe A.D. BAUM, "Anonymity of the New Testament History Books. A Stylistic Device in the Context of Greco-Roman and Ancient Near Eastern Literature", *NT* 50 (2008) 1-23.

Sachverhalt Rechnung zu tragen⁽⁵⁷⁾. Welche Deutung legt die Anonymität der Apostelgeschichte nahe?

Der Erzähler hätte die Option gehabt, gar nicht auf seine eigene Beteiligung an den geschilderten Vorgängen hinzuweisen, indem er sich und die anderen Paulusbegleiter mit der 3. Person Plural bezeichnete: "Sie fuhren nun von Troas ab und kamen geraden Laufs nach Samothrace ..." (Apg 16,11). Dass er nicht so weit gegangen ist, zeigt, dass er seinen Lesern gegenüber durchaus als (sporadischer) Reisebegleiter des Paulus in Erscheinung treten wollte. Offensichtlich wollte er durchaus den Anspruch erheben, dass er den Paulus persönlich kannte und ihn, wenn auch nur wenige Monate, auf seinen Reisen begleitet hat.

Darauf hätte er auch im Stil der griechischen (und hebräischen) Geschichtsschreibung in der 3. Person hinweisen können. Dann aber wäre es unvermeidlich gewesen, dass er seinen Namen erwähnte: "Paulus und Lukas (und ihre Begleiter) fuhren von Troas ab und kamen geraden Laufs nach Samothrace" (Apg 16,11). Und um seinen Lesern zu verstehen zu geben, dass der namentlich erwähnte Lukas der Verfasser des Buches ist, hätte er wie die griechischen Historiker bereits im Prolog (oder Titel) seinen Namen nennen und/oder mitten in seiner Erzählung im Stil eines Thucydides ausdrücklich darauf hinweisen müssen, dass der namentlich genannte Reisebegleiter des Paulus mit dem Verfasser der Apostelgeschichte identisch ist: "Paulus und Lukas, der dieses Werk geschrieben hat, (und ihre Begleiter) fuhren ab" (Apg 16,11). In beiden Fällen hätte der Verfasser, um seinen Autopsieanspruch zu erheben, seine offenbar bewusst gewählte Anonymität aufgeben müssen. Wollte der Autor der Apostelgeschichte seine persönliche Teilnahme an einigen der von ihm geschilderten Reisebewegungen anzeigen, ohne seine Anonymität aufzugeben, war das nahe liegendste und einfachste Mittel, sich in den autobiografischen Abschnitten der 1. Person zu bedienen.

3. *Der Verzicht auf die 1. Person Singular in den Acta*

Der Autor der Wir-Stellen unterscheidet sich aber nicht nur dadurch von den Ich-Erzählern der römischen Geschichtsschreibung,

⁽⁵⁷⁾ *The "We" Passages*, 88: "Why would the author conceal his identity throughout the two volumes only to reveal his presence during the last part of Acts in such an incomprehensible way as the intermittent employment of first person plural grammatical style?"

dass er anonym bleibt. Zweitens erwähnt er sich selbst ausschließlich in der 1. Person Plural (“wir”), nie in der 1. Person Singular (“ich”). In keiner Szene löst er sich als Einzelakteur von den Handlungen der Gruppe, der er angehört. Mit dieser Gruppe nimmt er Abschied, reist ab, fährt oder segelt, landet oder kommt an, begrüßt oder wird begrüßt, bleibt oder herbergt und reist weiter. Der Verfasser sagt von sich nicht viel mehr, als dass er mit anderen zusammen an mehreren Reisebewegungen beteiligt war. Dagegen wird die autobiografische 1. Person Plural in der paganen Geschichtsschreibung immer mit der 1. Person Singular kombiniert. Jedenfalls sind keine anderen Beispiele bekannt. “If Acts is a first person ancient history, then it is alone in its lack of the first person singular participation”⁽⁵⁸⁾. Dieses Urteil lässt sich auf die alttestamentliche Geschichtsschreibung ausdehnen. Auch in den Büchern Esra und Nehemia wechselt das “wir” des Erzählers mit seinem “ich” ab. Die diesbezügliche Eigenart der Apostelgeschichte wird in der folgenden Tabelle sichtbar. Ein eingeschränktes “ja” oder “nein” wird durch Klammern gekennzeichnet.

	“er”	“ich”	“wir”
Hebräische Geschichtsschreibung (Gen – 2 Kön)	(Nein)	Nein	Nein
Lukasevangelium	Nein	Nein	Nein
Johannesevangelium	Ja	Nein	(Nein)
Apostelgeschichte	Nein	Nein	Ja
Römische Geschichtsschreibung.	Nein	Ja	Ja
Griechische Geschichtsschreibung	Ja	Nein	Nein

Die missionarischen Aktivitäten, denen diese Reisen dienen, werden allesamt dem Paulus zugeschrieben. Er wird regelmäßig (in der 3. Person) als Akteur geschildert, der private Gespräche führt, öffentliche Ansprachen hält, Dämonen austreibt und gefangen genommen wird. In aller Regel wird Paulus gleichzeitig als Angehöriger der Wir-Gruppe aufgefasst, der gemeinsam mit dieser reist. Nur an wenigen Stellen stehen der Name Paulus und die 1. Person Plural so neben einander, dass Paulus nicht als Mitglied der Wir-Gruppe gedacht werden kann: Die Magd mit dem Wahrsagegeist “folgte dem Paulus und uns” (Apg 16,17). Und: “Am folgenden Tag ging Paulus mit uns zu Jakobus” (Apg 21,18). Einige Male handelt die Wir-Gruppe sogar an Paulus bzw. als sein Gegenüber: “Wir fuhren ab nach Assos und wollten dort den Paulus aufnehmen” (Apg 20,13). Und:

⁽⁵⁸⁾ PRAEDER, “First Person Narration”, 208.

“Wir baten ..., dass er nicht nach Jerusalem hinaufgehen möchte” (Apg 21,12)⁽⁵⁹⁾. Die in diesen wenigen Stellen angedeuteten Aktivitäten, die der Wir-Erzähler unabhängig von Paulus unternimmt, sind das Maximum an Selbstständigkeit, das er sich dem Apostel gegenüber erlaubt. Und er verlässt auch an diesen Stellen nicht die Wir-Gruppe.

Dass Lukas ganz darauf verzichtet hat, als individuell handelnder Akteur aufzutreten, deutet darauf hin, dass er abgesehen von seinem Augenzeugenanspruch so weit wie möglich im Hintergrund bleiben wollte. Er erhob keinerlei Anspruch, in nennenswerter Weise an den missionarischen Aktivitäten des Paulus beteiligt gewesen zu sein und befließigte sich insofern einer größtmöglichen auktorialen Zurückhaltung.

Eine vergleichbare Zurückhaltung lag den römischen Historikern Ammianus Marcellinus oder Dio Cassius fern. Daher traten sie in ihren Werken als Angehörige einer aktiv handelnden Wir-Gruppe und mit einem individuell agierenden “ich” in Erscheinung. Dem *Auctor ad Theophilum* dürfte es nicht darum gegangen sein, möglichst genau die Art und Weise nachzuahmen, wie römische (und alttestamentliche) Historiker sich der 1. Person bedient haben. Dem Erzähler der Apostelgeschichte bot die anonyme Beschränkung auf die 1. Person Plural (“wir”) die einfachste Möglichkeit, einerseits eine Teilnahme an einigen der von ihm geschilderten Reiseabschnitte anzuzeigen und sich gleichzeitig so weit irgend möglich im Hintergrund seiner eigenen Erzählung aufzuhalten.

4. Eine Analogie zur anonymen Wir-Erzählung der Acta

Auf eine enge Analogie zu dieser besonderen Art der autobiografischen Erzählung im lukanischen Werk hat bereits A. D. Nock hingewiesen⁽⁶⁰⁾. Sein Hinweis scheint allerdings nirgends aufgegriffen worden zu sein. Die *Vita Nicolai Sionitae* aus dem 6. Jh. n. Chr. erzählt von der Kindheit und Jugend des Nikolaos im kleinasiatischen Lykien einschließlich seiner ersten Jerusalemreise (1-13), von seinen Wundern (14-26), seiner zweiten Jerusalemreise (27-38. 39-46), der Pest des Jahres 541/42 (47-57. 58-66), der Ernennung des Nikolaos zum Bischof von Pinara (67-69) und von seinem Tod (70-75. 76-80).

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Etwas zu weit geht daher PLÜMACHER, “Wirklichkeitserfahrung”, 13-14, mit der Aussage, es handle “nie die im ‚Wir‘ zusammengefaßte Gruppe”.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ “The Book of Acts” (1953), *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (Hrsg. Z. STEWART) (Oxford 1972) II, 827-828.

Der Autor dieser Lebensbeschreibung bleibt wie Lukas konsequent anonym. Und er erhebt den Anspruch, an der ersten und zweiten Jerusalemreise des Nikolaos beteiligt gewesen zu sein. Dies hat er dadurch angezeigt, dass er wie Lukas gelegentlich ohne jede Vorbereitung zum "wir" übergeht (9. 11. 27-28. 32):

Nach dem Willen Gottes reiste der Abt Nikolaos ein zweites Mal in die heilige Stadt Jerusalem, um vor dem ehrwürdigen Holz des Kreuzes auf die Knie zu fallen ... er nahm zwei seiner Diener mit sich, und am Tag nach der Mitte zwischen Ostern und Pfingsten gingen wir an Bord des Schiffes. Die Seeleute nahmen uns mit Freuden auf, und der Herr schickte uns günstigen Wind⁽⁶¹⁾.

Wie Lukas bediente sich dieser anonyme Autor der 1. Person nur im Plural und sagte an keiner Stelle seiner Erzählung "ich".

In genau derselben Weise wie der Autor der Apostelgeschichte über Paulus hat der Verfasser der *Vita Nicolai Sionitae* über Nikolaos mit größtmöglicher auktorialer Zurückhaltung erzählt. Um auf seine persönliche Bekanntschaft mit seiner Hauptperson hinweisen zu können, ohne dabei seine Anonymität aufgeben zu müssen, hat er sich mit dieser stellenweise in einem "wir" zusammengeschlossen. Und da er nicht den Anspruch erheben wollte, in nennenswerter Weise zu der von ihm erzählten Geschichte beigetragen zu haben, hat er auf jedes "ich" verzichtet⁽⁶²⁾. Die Art und Weise, wie Lukas sich in den autobiografischen Passagen der Acta um größtmögliche auktoriale Zurückhaltung bemüht hat, war im Kontext der antiken Geschichtsschreibung ungewöhnlich, ist aber nicht ohne jede Analogie.

V. Autobiografisches Erzählen im vierten Evangelium

Der Verfasser des Markusevangeliums dürfte sich (auch falls er Markus hieß) nirgends in der dritten Person erwähnt haben. Er agierte als externer Erzähler. Aus frühkirchlicher Perspektive hat der Verfasser des Matthäusevangeliums zweimal in der 3. Person seinen Namen genannt, in der Berufungsgeschichte des Zöllners Matthäus (Mt 9,9) und in der Apostelliste (Mt 10,3). Sieht man allerdings von der

⁽⁶¹⁾ VNS 27; zitiert nach H. BLUM, *Die Vita Nicolai Sionitae*. Griechischer Text (Bonn 1997) 46-47.

⁽⁶²⁾ Als weitere Analogie kommen die Wir-Stellen in den aus dem 2. Jahrhundert stammenden Johannesakten in Frage; vgl. P.J. LALLEMAN, *The Acts of John. A Two-Stage Initiation into Johannine Gnosticism* (Studies on the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles 4; Leuven 1998) 75-88.

sekundären Zuschreibung des ersten Evangeliums an den Apostel Matthäus ab, ist ein Auftreten des Autors in der 3. Person nirgends zu erkennen. Der erste Evangelist präsentiert seinen Stoff nicht als interner Erzähler.

Komplizierter liegen die Dinge im vierten Evangelium. Der redaktionellen Angabe in Joh 21,24 zufolge hat "der Jünger, den Jesus liebte" (Joh 21,20), das Evangelium geschrieben⁽⁶³⁾. Dieser "Jünger, den Jesus liebte", wird im Evangelium nur wenige Male genannt, einmal beim letzten Abendmahl (Joh 13,23), einmal unter dem Kreuz (Joh 19,26) und dreimal in der Ostergeschichte, jeweils neben Petrus (Joh 20,2; 21,7.20). Der Name dieses Jüngers wird nirgends erwähnt, weder im Evangelium selbst, noch in der redaktionellen Notiz, die ihn als Verfasser des Buches identifiziert. Warum redet der Autor des Johannesevangeliums von sich nur namenlos in der 3. Person?

1. Bisherige Deutungen des johanneischen Er-Stils

(1) Th. Zahn und E. Meyer haben als Analogie die Erzählweise der griechischen Historiker herangezogen, speziell die historischen Werke Xenophons⁽⁶⁴⁾. Ebenso gut könnte der vierte Evangelist sich der 3. Person in Anlehnung an die alttestamentliche Geschichtsschreibung bedient haben (vgl. die Tabelle unter IV.3). Wenn er den Pentateuch für ein Werk des Mose hielt (s.o.), könnte er dessen Erzählstil nachgeahmt haben, der sich aus dieser Perspektive ebenfalls nur in der 3. Person genannt hat. Allerdings kannten sowohl die pagane (römische) als auch die alttestamentliche Geschichtsschreibung (in den Büchern Esra und Nehemia) auch die Option, sich der 1. Person zu bedienen. Warum hat der vierte Evangelist sich nicht wie der Verfasser der Apostelgeschichte für die 1. Person entschieden?

(2) H. M. Jackson hat vermutet, der vierte Evangelist habe für seine Erzählung dadurch, dass er sich von seiner eigenen Person als Akteur distanzierte, indem er sich autobiografisch in der 3. Person nannte, Zuverlässigkeit und Genauigkeit beanspruchen wollen. Denn "the first person became increasingly typical of fiction"⁽⁶⁵⁾. Diese These lässt sich angesichts der zahlreichen (römischen) Geschichts-

⁽⁶³⁾ Siehe RESE, "Selbstzeugnis", 85-90.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ T. ZAHN, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons* (Erlangen 1888-92) I/1, 474; MEYER, *Ursprung und Anfänge*, I, 313; ähnlich jetzt auch R. BAUCKHAM, "Historiographical Characteristics of the Gospel of John", *NTS* 53 (2007) 30.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ "Ancient Self-Referential Conventions and Their Implications for the Authorship and Integrity of the Gospel of John", *JTS* 50 (1999) 25, 29-30.

werke im Ich-Stil nicht aufrecht erhalten. Vielmehr war die 1. Person die typische Erzählperspektive für tagebuchartige Aufzeichnungen und autobiografische Notizen⁽⁶⁶⁾.

(3) Th. Zahn hat wiederholt die Annahme formuliert, der vierte Evangelist habe die 1. Person aus Scheu vor der Heiligkeit der von ihm geschilderten Geschichte vermieden. Diese Scheu sei um so größer gewesen, "je heiliger ihm diese Geschichte war, und je anhaltender gerade er ihrem Mittelpunkt nahe gestanden hatte"⁽⁶⁷⁾. Aber warum sollte der Evangelist weniger Scheu empfunden haben, sich in der 3. Person in seiner Erzählung des Lebens Jesu auftreten zu lassen?

Weiter führt auch für das vierte Evangelium die ganz praktische Überlegung, welche Optionen dem Erzähler zur Verfügung standen.

2. Der Vorzug des autobiografischen Er-Stils im vierten Evangelium

Hätte der vierte Evangelist sich wie Lukas der 1. Person bedient, dann hätte er an den Stellen, an denen im Evangelium vom Lieblingsjünger die Rede ist, ein "ich" verwendet. Statt "da sagte jener Jünger, den Jesus liebte, zu Petrus" (Joh 21,7) hätte er wesentlich einfacher formulieren können: "Da sagte ich zu Petrus". Die Verwendung der 1. Person Singular an den wenigen Stellen, an denen er als Individuum auftritt und handelt, hätte ihn allerdings dazu genötigt, auch überall dort, wo er lediglich als Mitglied des Jüngerkreises an einer Episode beteiligt war, die 1. Person (Plural) zu verwenden. Das "wir" hätte er in diesem Fall um ein Vielfaches häufiger verwenden müssen als Lukas. Denn als Mitglied des Apostelkreises (Joh 13,23) musste der Lieblingsjünger (der das Evangelium Joh 21,24 zufolge geschrieben hat) an fast allen Szenen beteiligt gewesen sein, in denen er die Jünger Jesu erwähnt. Die Verwendung des Wir-Stils hätte den Erzähler dazu gezwungen, in nahezu jedem Kapitel seines Werkes mit den entsprechenden Personalpronomen in Erscheinung zu treten. Joh 4,31-34 etwa hätte lauten müssen:

In der Zwischenzeit baten wir ihn und sprachen: 'Rabbi, iss!' Er aber sprach zu uns: 'Ich habe eine Speise zu essen, die ihr nicht kennt'. Da sprachen wir zueinander: 'Hat ihm wohl jemand zu essen gebracht?' Jesus spricht zu uns: 'Meine Speise ist, dass ich den Willen dessen tue, der mich gesandt hat, und sein Werk vollbringe'.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ MARINCOLA, *Authority and Tradition*, 180-182.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Th. ZAHN, "Der Geschichtschreiber und sein Stoff im Neuen Testament" (1888), *Altes und Neues in Vorträgen und kleineren Aufsätzen* (Leipzig 1930) 19; vgl. DERS., *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Leipzig 1921) 546-548.

Dagegen bot die Verwendung des Er-Stils dem Erzähler die Möglichkeit, seine eigene Person in den meisten Fällen unter der unspezifischen 3. Person Plural (“die Jünger” oder “sie”) zu verbergen und seine persönliche Beteiligung an den geschilderten Ereignissen nur an den wenigen Stellen sichtbar werden zu lassen, an denen er als Individuum handelte oder sprach⁽⁶⁸⁾.

Warum aber hat der Evangelist nicht auch auf diese Erwähnungen seiner eigenen Person verzichtet und sich nicht ganz aus der eigenen Erzählung zurückgezogen? In diesem Fall hätte er auf den Anspruch verzichten müssen, dass er bei einigen zentralen Ereignissen des Evangeliums eine sehr individuelle Rolle gespielt hat, beim letzten Abendmahl als engster Vertrauter Jesu (Joh 13,23), bei der Kreuzigung als neuer “Sohn” der Mutter Jesu (Joh 19,26) und in der Ostergeschichte als wichtiger Auferstehungszeuge neben Petrus (Joh 20,2; 21,7.20). So weit wollte der Erzähler in seiner auktorialen Zurückhaltung offensichtlich nicht gehen. Die Selbstbezeichnung in der 3. Person (“der Jünger, den Jesus lieb hatte”) bot dem Erzähler des vierten Evangeliums die beste Möglichkeit, an einigen Stellen seines Buches als Akteur in Erscheinung zu treten und sich gleichzeitig die meiste Zeit möglichst unauffällig im Hintergrund der eigenen Erzählung aufzuhalten.

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* *

Die im Kontext der antiken Literaturgeschichte nahe liegendste Deutung der lukanischen Wir-Stellen und der johanneischen Lieblingsjünger-Texte ist die autobiografische. Allerdings dürfte Lukas mit seinen autobiografischen Wir-Stellen nicht den Ich-Stil der römischen Geschichtsschreibung nachgeahmt haben. Ebenso wenig hat der vierte Evangelist mit seinen Lieblingsjünger-Texten den autobiografischen Er-Stil der griechischen Historiografie übernommen. Denn im auffälligen Unterschied zu den griechischen und römischen Historikern ihrer Zeit verfassten die neutestamentlichen Erzähler ihre autobiografischen Abschnitte anonym. Das Kriterium, anhand dessen sie sich für ihre unterschiedlichen autobiografischen Erzähltechniken entschieden, war ihr Streben nach auktorialer

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Diese Beobachtung berührt sich mit einem der fünf Gründe, die D. TOVEY, *Narrative Art and Act in the Fourth Gospel* (JSNT.SS 151; Sheffield 1997) 143-147, zur Erklärung der selbst gewählten Anonymität des Lieblingsjüngers zusammengetragen hat.

Zurückhaltung. Beide Autoren wollten zwar eine eigene Beteiligung an den von ihnen geschilderten Ereignissen behaupten, bemühten sich aber gleichzeitig darum, dies so unauffällig wie möglich zu tun. Für Lukas bestand die zurückhaltendste Erzähltechnik darin, von den (wenigen) Episoden, die er als einer der Reisebegleiter des Paulus miterlebt hatte, anonym in der 1. Person Plural zu erzählen. Hätte er in der 3. Person erzählt, hätte er, um seine Augenzeugenschaft anzuzeigen, seinen Namen nennen müssen. Der vierte Evangelist konnte möglichst weitgehend im Hintergrund seiner Erzählung bleiben, wenn er in den (wenigen) Perikopen, in denen er von eigenen individuellen Aktionen berichten wollte, die 3. Person wählte und seinen Eigennamen verschwieg. Hätte er sich der 1. Person bedient, wäre er in allen Kapiteln des Evangeliums zu sehen gewesen. Die Frage, inwiefern der autobiografische Anspruch, den zwei der neutestamentlichen Erzähler erheben, historisch zutrifft, ist nicht Gegenstand der vorliegenden narrativen Analyse und muss unabhängig davon beantwortet werden. Hier sollte lediglich gezeigt werden, dass die beiden ganz unterschiedlichen autobiografischen Erzähltechniken der neutestamentlichen Geschichtsbücher sich gemeinsam sehr plausibel als Resultat auktorialer Zurückhaltung interpretieren lassen.

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SUMMARY

Read against the background of ancient literary practice (in Near Eastern and Greco-Roman historiography), the "we" passages in the Acts of the Apostles (in Acts 13–28) and the statements about the beloved disciple in the Fourth Gospel (Joh 13,23; 19,26; 20,2; 21,7.20) should probably be interpreted as autobiographical remarks. Yet, unlike Greek and Roman historians the New Testament narrators wrote their books, including these autobiographical passages, anonymously. They appear to have done so because they wanted to claim personal presence at a few crucial points in the narrated history while at the same time intending to remain as invisible as possible. For the author of Acts the use of the first Person Plural provided the best opportunity to conceal his name without disappearing completely from his narrative. The fourth Evangelist decided to hide behind the anonymous figure of the beloved disciple whom he introduced in the third person; had he used the first person he would have been much more visible throughout his whole book.

The Style of Galatians

Especially since the publication of H. D. Betz's commentary in 1979 much attention has been given to rhetorical analysis of Paul's letter to the Galatians⁽¹⁾. Discussion has focused on the species of Galatians' rhetoric, i.e., whether it is forensic, deliberative or epideictic; little attention has been given to its style⁽²⁾. In what follows I will attempt to supply that lack.

In *De Oratore* 3.37 Cicero identifies four virtues of style: 1) correct diction, 2) lucidity, 3) ornament, and 4) appropriateness⁽³⁾. He discusses ornament at length in 3.96-208; in the midst of this (in 3.199-200) he discusses three general styles, namely the full, plain and middle styles. Cicero organizes ornament into two general categories. Vocabulary is ornamented by use of 1) rare words 2) new coinages, and 3) metaphors and other tropes. Syntax is ornamented by 1) avoidance of harsh clash of consonants and hiatus of vowels, 2) rhythm, and 3) figures of speech and thought. Elsewhere (e.g., *Orator* 204) Cicero speaks of periodic style as a means of ornament.

(¹) H.D. BETZ, *Galatians. A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia 1979). On the history of rhetorical criticism of Paul's letters in general and Galatians in particular, see R.A. BRYANT, *The Risen Crucified Christ in Galatians* (SBLDS 185; Atlanta 2001) 30-37, 44-52. The history of recent rhetorical criticism of Galatians is also described in *The Galatians Debate. Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation* (ed. M. NANOS) (Peabody, MA 2002) xv-xxii, 3-113. Rhetorical analysis of Galatians that is not mentioned in these summaries includes S. TSANG, *From Slaves to Sons. A New Rhetoric Analysis on Paul's Slave Metaphors in His Letter to the Galatians* (Studies in Biblical Literature 81; New York 2005). P.H. Kern has questioned the validity of such analysis (see his *Rhetoric and Galatians. Assessing an Approach to Paul's Epistle* [SNTSMS 101; Cambridge 1998]).

(²) BRYANT, *Risen Crucified Christ*, 128-140, comments on the style of Gal 1,1-10, and elements of the style of Galatians have been discussed by many authors, some of whom will be noted below. However, no one has tried to describe the style of Galatians in general.

(³) The discussion of stylistic norms here and elsewhere in this essay is dependent on the discussion in T. CALLAN, "The Style of the Second Letter of Peter", *Bib* 84 (2003) 202-224. For another discussion of style see BRYANT, *Risen Crucified Christ*, 91-104.

I. The Vocabulary of Galatians

The vocabulary of Galatians is rather highly ornamented. It is ornamented first of all by Paul's use of four rare words in Galatians: Ἰουδαῖζειν and Ἰουδαϊκῶς, both in 2,14, φρεναπατᾶ in 6,3 and εὐπροσωπῆσαι in 6,12. None of these four words is used elsewhere in the New Testament, and they seem to have been used rarely before Paul wrote Galatians⁽⁴⁾.

The vocabulary of Galatians is also ornamented by Paul's use of seven words that he may have coined himself: παρεισάκτους and ψευδαδέλφους, both in 2,4, ὀρθοποδοῦσιν in 2,14, ἐπιδιατάσσεται in 3,15, προκεκυρωμένην in 3,17, πεισμονή in 5,8, and εἰδωλολατρία in 5,20. There is no indication that any of these was used in pre-Christian Greek⁽⁵⁾. Five of them are found only here in the New Testament. ψευδαδέλφους is also found in 2 Cor 11,26; Paul seems to have coined the term for one letter and used it again in the other. εἰδωλολατρία is also found in 1 Cor 10,14; Col 3,5 and in 1 Pet 4,3. Since 1 Peter probably does not antedate the letters of Paul, Paul seems to have coined the term for one of his letters, used it in others himself, and then had it used by others⁽⁶⁾.

Finally the vocabulary of Galatians is ornamented by Paul's use of metaphor and other tropes. I count 36 words and phrases used

(4) Ἰουδαῖζειν is used once in Esth 8,17 (LXX); later it is found in Josephus, *J. W.* 2.454, 463; Plutarch, *Cicero* 7.5 (864C); Ignatius, *Magn.* 10.3. Ἰουδαϊκῶς is used once in Strabo 16.4.9; later it is found in Josephus, *J. W.* 6.17. φρεναπατᾶω is used twice in pre-Christian Greek, namely in Dorotheus, *Fragments* and Philo, *Fragments*. εὐπροσωπῆσαι is used once in a pre-Christian Greek papyrus.

(5) However, παρεισάγω, the verb cognate to παρεισάκτους, is fairly common in pre-Christian Greek. It is found, e.g., in Polybius 1.18.3; 2.7.8; Diodorus Siculus 12.41.4; Philo, *Sacr.* 94; later the verb is found in 2 Pet 2,1; Plutarch, *Mor.* 261B and other places. The noun and adjective cognate to ὀρθοποδοῦσιν are both found in pre-Christian Greek, namely in Sophocles, *Antigone* 985 and Nicander, *Alexipharmaca* 419. J.D.G. Dunn (*The Epistle to the Galatians* [BNTC; Peabody, MA 1995] 127) also identifies ὀρθοποδοῦσιν as a new coinage by Paul. Ben Witherington III (*Grace in Galatia. A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Galatians* [Grand Rapids, MI 1998] 371) also implies that πεισμονή was a new coinage by Paul.

(6) Betz (*Galatians*, 284) and Friedrich Büchsel ("εἰδωλον κτλ.," *TDNT* II, 380) say the concept is Hellenistic-Jewish in origin, but they do not cite any pre-Pauline uses of the term.

metaphorically⁽⁷⁾. In addition there are metaphors implicit in the proverbs cited in 5,9 and 6,7. The metaphors in 6,7 are elaborated in 6,8-9. Many of these metaphors can be seen as expressions of five basic metaphors, namely, the metaphors of the family of God⁽⁸⁾, freedom vs. slavery⁽⁹⁾,

⁽⁷⁾ θεοῦ πατρός (1,1.3.4; 4,6); ἀδελφοί (1,2.11; 2,4; 3,15; 4,12.28.31; 5,11.13; 6,1.18); Χριστοῦ δοῦλος (1,10); τρέχω ἢ ἔδραμον (2,2; 5,7); παρεισάκτους (2,4); παρεισήλθον κατασκοπήσαι (2,4); καταδουλώσουσιν (2,4; 4,3); στῦλοι (2,9); ὀρθοποδοῦσιν (2,14); Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι (2,19; 5,24); υἱοί (3,7.26; 4,6.7); ἐξηγόρασεν (3,13; 4,5); παιδαγωγός (3,24-25); ἐνεδύσασθε (3,27; BETZ, *Galatians*, 187-188); κληρονόμοι (3,29; 4,1.7); νήπιοι (4,3); δοῦλος (4,7); ἐδουλεύσατε (4,8.9.25; 5,13); ἐπιστρέφετε (4,9); τέκνα (4,19.25.28.31); ὠδίνω (4,19); δουλείαν (4,24) ζυγῷ δουλείας (4,24); μήτηρ (4,26); ὀφειλέτης (5,3; K.A. MORLAND, *The Rhetoric of Curse in Galatians*. Paul Confronts Another Gospel [Emory Studies in Early Christianity; Atlanta 1995] 229-230); ἐξεπέσατε (5,4); ἐνέκοψεν (5,7); δάκνετε καὶ κατεσθίετε — ἀναλωθήτε (5,15); περιπατεῖτε (5,16); βασιλείαν θεοῦ (5,21); κληρονομήσουσιν (5,21); καρπός (5,22); στοιχῶμεν (5,25; 6,16); Ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε (6,2; BETZ, *Galatians*, 299) / ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον βαστάσει (6,5); οἰκείους (6,10); δι' οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ γὰρ κόσμῳ (6,14); τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματί μου βαστάζω (6,17; BETZ, *Galatians*, 324; E.D.W. BURTON, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* [ICC; Edinburgh 1921] 360-361).

⁽⁸⁾ God as father (1,1 etc.); Christians as brothers (1,2 etc.); Christians as sons of God (3,26 etc.) and heirs of God (4,1 etc.) who will inherit the kingdom of God (5,21); once they were infants (4,3; on this see Betz, *Galatians*, 204, n. 26; R.N. LONGENECKER, *Galatians* [WBC 41; Dallas 1990] 156); as young children under pedagogue (3,24-5; on this see MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 227; TSANG, *From Slaves to Sons*, 105-116; D.J. WILLIAMS, *Paul's Metaphors*. Their Context and Character [Peabody, MA 1999] 61-63); they are the household of faith (6,10; BETZ, *Galatians*, 311, n. 199; BURTON, *Galatians*, 346; LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 283). They are also sons of Abraham (3,7) and heirs of Abraham (3,29); their mother (allegorically Sarah) is the Jerusalem above (4,26), and they are her children (4,28.31), not children of the present Jerusalem (allegorically Hagar) (4,25.31). The Galatians are also Paul's children whom he labors to deliver (4,19; BURTON, *Galatians*, 248; WILLIAMS, *Metaphors*, 56-57; WITHERINGTON, *Grace in Galatia*, 314-316).

⁽⁹⁾ Paul is a slave of Christ (1,10); Christians serve one another as slaves (5,13). Paul may also present himself as a slave in 6,17 if the marks to which he refers are the marks of a slave (so TSANG, *From Slaves to Sons*, 76-77; WILLIAMS, *Metaphors*, 114-115). At the Jerusalem conference the false brothers sought to enslave Gentile Christians (2,4; on this see TSANG, *From Slaves to Sons*, 81-87); this would be a return to slavery associated with infancy (4,1; 5,1), slavery to the elements of the universe (4,3.9; on 4,1-10 see TSANG, *From Slaves to Sons*, 116-131), after Christ has freed them from slavery by purchase (3,13; 4,5; Betz, *Galatians*, 150; T. CALLAN, "The Soteriology of the Second Letter of Peter", *Bib* 82 [2001] 549-559, especially pp. 549-550); for Jews this was a matter of being under the law (4,5), of being children of Hagar a slave girl (4,22-23) whose

running and walking⁽¹⁰⁾, crucifixion⁽¹¹⁾ and agriculture⁽¹²⁾. 27 of the 36 words and phrases belong to one of these groups, leaving 9 metaphorical words and phrases in addition to these basic five.

Of the five basic metaphors, the first two — the family of God and freedom vs. slavery — are used most frequently; they are also connected. Paul relates the condition of the minor child to that of the slave, and the condition of the adult child to that of the free person. Paul also contrasts the situation of the child of a slave mother with that of the child of a free mother. The metaphor of crucifixion is also related to that of freedom vs. slavery since crucifixion is a form of execution especially associated with slaves⁽¹³⁾ and the crucifixion of Jesus and Christians' participation in it is what sets slaves free. The relationships among these metaphors indicate the centrality of the contrast between freedom and slavery to the argument of Galatians.

In addition to metaphor, we also find the following tropes:

children are in slavery (4,24-25.31; on 4,30 see TSANG, *From Slaves to Sons*, 87-104); for Gentiles it was a matter of serving false gods as slaves (4,8); those purchased by Christ are children of Sarah, a free woman (4,23.26.31).

⁽¹⁰⁾ Paul uses running as an image for Christian life (on this see BETZ, *Galatians*, 88; DUNN, *Galatians*, 93, 273; LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 49; WILLIAMS, *Metaphors*, 268) in 2,2; 5,7. In the latter verse he further develops the image of running by speaking of someone putting an obstacle in the way of the runner (BETZ, *Galatians*, 264; BURTON, *Galatians*, 282; DUNN, *Galatians*, 274; LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 230; WITHERINGTON, *Grace in Galatia*, 371). Paul uses walking as an image for Christian life in 2,14 (BETZ, *Galatians*, 111; WITHERINGTON, *Grace in Galatia*, 157); 5,16 (see BURTON, *Galatians*, 298; LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 244; WILLIAMS, *Metaphors*, 198-199). He may use a related image in 5,25; 6,16 if these passages invoke the picture of soldiers lined up behind one another, perhaps in order to march (see BETZ, *Galatians*, 294; G. DELLING, "στοιχέω κτλ", *TDNT* VII, 666; WILLIAMS, *Metaphors*, 199. Delling himself thinks στοιχέω in these passages simply means "agree" [pages 667-669]). Paul may also use a related image in 4,9 where he speaks of the Galatians as turning back. This may evoke the image of changing the direction of a journey (see WILLIAMS, *Metaphors*, 207-208, n. 57).

⁽¹¹⁾ Paul sees crucifixion with Christ (2,19; BURTON, *Galatians*, 320) as the means by which Christ transferred Christians from slavery to freedom; in union with Christ they have crucified the flesh (5,24), and the world has been crucified to them and they to the world (6,14).

⁽¹²⁾ Fruit of the spirit (5,22; BURTON, *Galatians*, 313; LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 259; WILLIAMS, *Metaphors*, 40-41); sowing and reaping (6,7-9; BETZ, *Galatians*, 308-309; WILLIAMS, *Metaphors*, 38-40).

⁽¹³⁾ M. HENGEL, *Crucifixion*. In the ancient world and the folly of the message of the cross (London 1977) 51-63; WILLIAMS, *Metaphors*, 115.

antonomasia (8 times), hyperbole (4 times), metonymy (11 times) and synecdoche (twice)⁽¹⁴⁾.

II. The Syntax of Galatians

1. *Hiatus*

Quintilian says that for successive words to end and begin with two long vowels, especially when they are the same, and most especially the vowels 'o' and 'a,' constitutes the worst problem. But he also says that he is not sure whether too little or too much care to avoid hiatus is the worse (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.33-37). Quintilian says that for successive words to end and begin with 's' or 'x' is jarring (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.37-38).

There seems to be little indication that Paul has made any great effort to avoid these problems in Galatians. In the first 7 verses of the letter, I count 20 instances of hiatus. However, none of these is an instance of successive words ending and beginning with the long vowels 'o' or 'a.' Likewise the first 7 verses of the letter include no instance of successive words ending and beginning with 's' or 'x'.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Antonomasia in Gal 1,6.15 (twice).23; 2,8; 3,5 (twice); 5,8; hyperbole in 1,9 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 149, n. 43; E.W. Bullinger [*Figures of Speech Used in the Bible Explained and Illustrated* {London 1898} 427] sees the reference to an angel in v. 8 as a hyperbolic hypothesis); 4,1 οὐδὲν διαφέρει δούλου (BETZ, *Galatians*, 203, n. 12; LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 162); 4,15 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 426); 5,15 δάκνετε καὶ κατεσθίετε — ἀναλωθήτε (BETZ, *Galatians*, 277; LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 244); metonymy in 1,8-9 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 152 — the expression "be a curse" is metonymy); 1,23 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 599 — faith in place of the thing believed); 2,7-9.12 τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας / τῆς περιτομῆς (BURTON, *Galatians*, 93, 94); 3,2.5 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 602 — faith in place of the thing believed); 3,13a (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 591; BURTON, *Galatians*, 171; MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 220 — the expression "be a curse" is metonymy); 3,23 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 572, 599 — faith in place of the thing believed); 5,5 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 599 — faith in place of the thing believed); 5,12 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 171, n. 119 — Bengel says that Paul refers to cutting away the foreskin but takes it to represent expulsion of the opponents); 6,14 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 612 — cross = the atonement accomplished via the cross and the resultant blessings); synecdoche in 1,8-9 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 150, 152 — by referring to himself/his coworkers and to an angel the whole field of possible seduction is implied); 1,16 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 645 — flesh and blood for human being).

2. Rhythm

With regard to rhythm, Cicero approvingly quotes Aristotle as prohibiting frequent use of iamb (short – long) and tribrach (short – short – short) and recommending primary use of the heroic foot, i.e., the dactyl (long – short – short)⁽¹⁵⁾. Aristotle also especially approves of the paean (either long – short – short – short, or short – short – short – long), the former kind at the beginning of a sentence, and the latter at the end. Cicero comments that the latter kind of paean is almost the same as the cretic (long – short – long) (3.182-183). Sentences should end with either the trochee (long – short) or dactyl or either of them alternating with the second kind of paean or the cretic (3.193).

Dionysius of Halicarnassus describes the twelve possible two- and three-syllable feet and evaluates each (*On Literary Composition* 17). The pyrrhic (short – short) is not impressive or solemn, while the spondee (long – long) is. The iamb is not ignoble, but the trochee is. The tribrach is a mean foot, but the molossus (long – long – long) is elevated. The amphibrach (short – long – short) is effeminate and ignoble. The anapest (short – short – long) and the dactyl are both very beautiful. The cretic is not ignoble. Both the bacchius (long – long – short) and hypobacchius (short – long – long) have dignity and grandeur.

Quintilian's discussion of rhythm (in *Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.45-120) is less prescriptive. He too describes the twelve possible two- and three-syllable feet (79-82) and argues that each has its proper use in prose (83, 87-89). He says that one should be concerned about no more than the last three feet of a sentence, nor fewer than two (95), and illustrates the effect of using various feet to conclude a sentence (95-111). He notes that Asian writers frequently end a sentence with two trochees (103).

The most common foot at the end of the sentences in Galatians is the trochee, found forty times⁽¹⁶⁾. This accords with the

⁽¹⁵⁾ Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 3.8. Aristotle speaks of the iamb and the trochee, and these are the words Cicero uses. However, Cicero understands trochee to mean what is commonly called tribrach and so misunderstands Aristotle, who does not use trochee in this sense. Aristotle's heroic foot may include spondee and anapest, as well as dactyl. Cicero summarizes the views of Aristotle somewhat differently, and less accurately, in *Orator* 191-196.

⁽¹⁶⁾ At the ends of Gal 1,11.17; 2,3.10.17b.19b.20a; 3,3.10a.10b.16b.20.21b.22.24.25.27.28a; 4,2.5.17.27.28; 5,1a.1b.3.7b.14.15.16.17a.17b.21.23a.25.26; 6,3.11.12.13.

recommendation of Cicero, but Dionysius of Halicarnassus says this foot is ignoble. Quintilian approves having two trochees end a sentence (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.103). This happens twelve times in Galatians⁽¹⁷⁾.

The second most common foot at the end of the sentences in Galatians is the spondee; it is found at the end of twenty-six sentences⁽¹⁸⁾. This foot is praised by Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Quintilian says that the spondee is best preceded by a cretic (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.97), as it is at the end of one of these sentences (Gal 3,4b). However, Quintilian says that two spondees should not end a sentence (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.97.101). This is the case twelve times in Galatians⁽¹⁹⁾; three times this is because the sentence ends with Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal 1,12; 3,26.28).

The third most common foot at the end of the sentences in Galatians is the dactyl. It is found twenty-four times⁽²⁰⁾. As noted above, both Cicero and Dionysus of Halicarnassus commend the dactyl. Quintilian approves ending with a dactyl (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.104).

Galatians' sentences also end with iamb (fourteen times), paean (fourteen times), cretic (eleven times), anapest (eleven times), tribrach (eight times) and hypobacchius (once)⁽²¹⁾. As noted above, Cicero disapproves of iamb and tribrach; Dionysus of Halicarnassus says that the iamb is not ignoble, but the tribrach is a mean foot; Quintilian seems to say it is acceptable to end a sentence with an iamb if it is preceded by a spondee or bacchius (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.99-100), but he agrees that the tribrach does not make a good ending (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.105). In Galatians the final iamb is preceded by a spondee four times (Gal 3,15a; 4,16; 6,5.10).

Cicero approves of paean and cretic; the cretic is also praised by

⁽¹⁷⁾ In Gal 1,17; 2,17b; 3,10b.21b.25; 4,27.28; 5,1a.14.23a.26; 6,3.

⁽¹⁸⁾ At the ends of Gal 1,7.8.9.10b.10c.12.22; 2,19a; 3,4b.12.16a.26.28b; 4,10.14.25b.26.29; 5,2.9.11b.13; 6,1.2.14.17b.

⁽¹⁹⁾ I.e., at the end of Gal 1,7.12.22; 3,26.28b; 4,25b.26.29; 5,11b; 6,1.14.17b.

⁽²⁰⁾ At the ends of Gal 1,10a.20.24; 2,1.2.12a.17a; 3,1.7.9.11.15b; 4,3.12b.21.22.24a.30b.31; 5,11a.23b; 6,7a.8.15.

⁽²¹⁾ An iamb is found at the ends of Gal 2,11.14.21a; 3,15a.21a; 4,8.11.15b.16; 5,7a.12; 6,5.10.18; a paean ends 1,14; 2,12b.20b; 3,17b.18a.29; 4,7.9.12a.19.20.24b; 6,9.17a; a cretic ends 1,5; 2,13.16.18; 3,2b.5.14; 4,30a; 5,6.24; 6,16; an anapest ends 1,19; 2,5; 3,2a.17a.19b.21c; 4,15a.25a; 5,8.10; 6,6; a tribrach ends 1,21; 2,21b; 3,18b.19a; 5,4.5.18; 6,4; and a hypobacchius ends 3,4a.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Quintilian (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.107); Quintilian does not approve ending with a paean (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.110-111). Dionysus of Halicarnassus approves use of anapest and hypobacchius. Cicero thinks the first kind of paean should be used at the beginning of a sentence (cf. also Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.111); however, it is used at the end of six sentences in Galatians⁽²²⁾. Quintilian says that the cretic makes an excellent ending, but disapproves preceding it with a trochee (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.107). This happens twice in Galatians (i.e., in 2,13.18).

Quintilian cautions that he does not recommend too great attention to rhythm (*Institutio Oratoria* 9.4.112-116; cf. Cicero, *De Oratore* 3.193). Augustine says that Paul and other scriptural writers seem not to pay much attention to harmonious ending of sentences, as far as he can tell from reading them in Latin translation. The one specific example he discusses is Romans 13,14 (*On Christian Doctrine* 4.20.40-41). In Galatians insufficient attention to the ending of sentences might be indicated most of all by the times sentences end with tribrach; everyone seems to agree that this is a poor ending. It might also be indicated by the six times sentences end with the second kind of paean; those who approve of the paean think this type should be used at the beginning not the end of a sentence. Some of the other sentence endings used in Galatians would also be found wanting by some, as indicated by the opinions mentioned above. However, for the most part the sentences of Galatians conclude in ways that are widely approved.

3. *Figures of speech and thought*

Galatians includes the following figures of speech: anadiplosis (2); antimereia (2); asyndeton (7); chiasm (5); correction (4); elimination (expeditio) (6); ellipsis (6); epanalepsis (1); paronomasia (2); pleonasm (2); polyptoton (2); proverbs (2)⁽²³⁾; reduplication (5); synonymy (1); transplacement (7)⁽²⁴⁾.

⁽²²⁾ At the ends of Gal 3,17b.18a.29; 4,9.24b; 6,9

⁽²³⁾ Betz (*Galatians*, 291) sees 5,25-6,10 as a series of *sententiae*.

⁽²⁴⁾ Anadiplosis in 4,31-5,1 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 255 — “freedom” repeated at the end of one sentence and the beginning of another); 5,7-8 (related words end 5,7 and begin 5,8); antimereia in 1,14 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 497 — noun used for adjective); 2,11 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 494 — participle used for adjective); asyndeton (see *Ad Herennium* 4.41) in 3,13-14 (LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 121; MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 215); 3,28 (cf.

Galatians includes the following figures of thought: antithesis (5); personification (3); questions (18); refining (3); understatement (2)⁽²⁵⁾.

BURTON, *Galatians*, 206); 4,10 (LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 181-182); 4,12b (BETZ, *Galatians*, 223); 5,4; 5,19-21 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 143); 5,22 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 143); chiasm in 3,16; 5,17 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 303 – antimetabole); 5,25 (BETZ, *Galatians*, 293); 6,8; 6,14 (BETZ, *Galatians*, 318); correction (see *Ad Herennium* 4.36) in 1,7a (BETZ, *Galatians*, 49; BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 910; MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 141, 143); 2,20 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 910); 3,4b? (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 911; MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 145); 4,9 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 910); elimination (*expeditio* see *Ad Herennium* 4.40) in 1,1; 1,11-12 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 156); 1,16-17; 4,14; 5,6; 6,15 (cf. Rom 9,16; 1 Cor 3,7; 5,8; [7,19]; 2 Cor 4,2; 7,12; Phil 2,3; 1 Tim 2,12; 6,17; 2 Tim 1,8); ellipsis in 2,7-8 (“gospel” and “apostle” not repeated); 2,17 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 88 – verb not repeated); 3,5 (BETZ, *Galatians*, 136 – main verb omitted); 4,24 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 57 – noun modified by “these” and object of “bringing forth” omitted); 5,4 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 68 – verb meaning “cut off” omitted); 5,17 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 88-89 – verb not repeated); epanalepsis in 5,4 (synonymous verbs begin and end the verse); paronomasia in 5,2-3 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 229, n. 63; DUNN, *Galatians*, 265 – play on words); 5,7-8 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 147); pleonasm in 2,5 (BETZ, *Galatians*, 91 – yield by submission); 4,9 *πάντων ἀνωθεν*; polyptoton in 1,8-9 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 271 – verb repeated in different moods and tenses); 2,19-20 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 282 – noun repeated in different cases and verb in different moods and tenses); proverbs / *gnomai* / *sententiae* in 5,9 *μικρὰ ζύμη ὅλον τὸ φύραμα ζυμοί* (BETZ, *Galatians*, 266); 6,7 *ὁ γὰρ ἐάν σπείρῃ ἄνθρωπος, τοῦτο καὶ θερίσει* (BETZ, *Galatians*, 307); reduplication (see *Ad Herennium* 4.38; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 9.3.28) in 1,8-9 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 148, 187, n. 17); 3,4b? (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 145); 3,2.5 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 194); 3,10 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 201 – *εἰσὶν* repeated); 4,9 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 264; MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 146 – *πάντων* repeated); synonymy in 1,12 (BULLINGER, *Figures of Speech*, 333); and transplacement/diaphora (Morland) (see *Ad Herennium* 4.21) in 2,17 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 189); 2,19a (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 190); 3,4b? (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 145, n. 23); 3,11-12 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 214, n. 120); 4,17-18 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 205, n. 90 – actually says 4,18-19); 4,21 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115); and 5,7-8 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 147, n. 34).

⁽²⁵⁾ Antithesis in 1,1 (DUNN, *Galatians*, 27); 3,3 (BETZ, *Galatians*, 133; DUNN, *Galatians*, 155-156; MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 194, n. 50); 3,20; 4,8-9; 5,17; personification (see *Ad Herennium* 4.66) in 3,8.22; 4,30 (BETZ, *Galatians*, 143, n. 42; DUNN, *Galatians*, 164); questions (see *Ad Herennium* 4.22, 23) in 1,10 (2); 2,14; 2,17; 3,1; 3,2; 3,3; 3,4; 3,5; 3,19; 3,21; 4,9; 4,15; 4,16; 4,21; 4,30; 5,7; 5,11; refining/expolitis (see *Ad Herennium* 4.54) in 1,8-9 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of*

4. Sentence structure

Most of the sentences of Galatians are short and simple. Galatians contains 2379 words organized into 149 sentences by my count. Thus each sentence averages about 16 words in length. By contrast 2 Peter averages 25 words per sentence.

However, Galatians contains several longer, more complex sentences⁽²⁶⁾. One of these is an instance in which the periodic style is used for ornament⁽²⁷⁾. The first of these longer, more complex sentences is 1,1-5, the letter salutation.

a) 1,1-5

As is typical of letter salutations, this consists of naming the senders of the letter (Παῦλος ἀπόστολος...καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ πάντες ἀδελφοί) and its recipients (ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας), and greeting them (χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). As is often the case in Paul's letter salutations, these elements of the salutation are elaborated in various ways. The first sender of the letter is modified by three prepositional phrases, on the last of which depends a participial phrase. The greeting of the letter is a wish for grace and peace from God and the Lord Jesus Christ. The latter is modified by a participial phrase, on which depends a purpose clause, on which in turn depends a relative clause.

While Paul commonly elaborates the salutations of his letters, this degree of elaboration is unusual. The only letter salutation that is more elaborate than this is the salutation of Romans. The next most elaborate after that of Galatians is the salutation of Titus. The length and syntactical complexity of the salutation of Galatians alone suggest that it is intended to make a good impression. However, it is also ornamented in several ways. First of all, it introduces the metaphor of Christians as the family of God. God is father (1,1.3) and Christians are brothers (1,2). Second, the opening line contains alliteration – five words that begin with α. Third, the three prepositional phrases that

Curse, 115, 148-149, 187, n. 17); 2,16 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 187, n. 17); 3,2.5 (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 194); and understatement/litotes (see *Ad Herennium* 4.50) in 5,8a (MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 147, 170) and 5,23b (LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 263; MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 115, 231).

⁽²⁶⁾ Cicero recommends such use of different sentence types in *Orator* 211; cf. also Demetrius, *On Style* 15.

⁽²⁷⁾ *Ad Herennium* lists the period among the figures of speech that can be used for ornament (4.27).

modify Paul can be seen as the figure of speech elimination; the first two prepositional phrases reject two possible origins of Paul's apostolate, and the third states its true origin. Fourth, and most important, the whole structure of the salutation is chiasmic.

In 1,1 the source of Paul's apostolate is said to be Jesus Christ and God the father; the latter is described in a participial phrase as having raised him (Jesus) from the dead. In 1,3 Paul wishes the Galatians grace and peace from God the father and the Lord Jesus Christ, reversing the order in which the two are mentioned in 1,1. Just as God was described in a participial phrase in 1,1, in 1,3-4 Jesus Christ is described in a participial phrase as having given himself for sins in order to rescue Christians from this present evil age. He did this according to the will of God the father, whom Paul praises in a doxology (1,5). He thus returns to the emphasis on God found in v. 1 after having emphasized the role of Jesus in v. 4. This forms an *inclusio*.

b) 1,15-17

The most elegant sentence in Galatians is 1,15-17. It begins with a temporal clause (1,15-16a), the subject of which is modified by two participial phrases, and on which depends a purpose clause. The main clause of the sentence (1,16b-17) is a compound clause consisting of four independent clauses. This well-turned period is itself an ornament. Perhaps Paul uses it here because it describes his conversion and its immediate aftermath, which may be the most crucial element of what he narrates in 1,11-2,14.

1,11-2,14 contains some of the longer sentences in Galatians, namely, in addition to 1,15-17, 1,13-14.18-19.23-24; 2,4-5.6-10. The last two of these we will discuss below. 1,15-17 is the most polished of these longer sentences. We can see the significance of 1,15-17 for the narrative in 1,11-2,14 from Paul's use of the figure of speech elimination in the main clause of the period. The first two parts of the main clause deny that Paul did things he might have done after his conversion; the last two say what he actually did. Paul used the same figure of speech in 1,1 and 1,11-12. In all three cases it is used to eliminate the possibility that Paul's apostleship is human in origin. After mentioning this in the letter salutation (1,1), Paul states it as the theme of 1,11-2,14 in 1,11-12. 1,15-17 is then one of his main supports for that contention.

If ὁ θεός does not appear in 1,15, as many manuscripts attest, the

two participial phrases found there would be instances of the trope antonomasia, substituting something for a proper name. σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι in 1,16 is an instance of the trope synecdoche, using parts for the whole; however, this is a thoroughly conventional synecdoche. The two participial phrases in 1,15 and the last two clauses in 1,17 are instances of the figure of speech isocolon, parts of a sentence with a virtually equal number of syllables.

c) 2,4-5.6-10

As we have noted above, this is another syntactically elaborate part of Galatians. Vv. 4-5 are an anacoluthon, lacking a main clause. It consists of a prepositional phrase whose object is modified by two relative clauses. Another relative clause and a purpose clause depend on the first of the two relative clauses, and another purpose clause depends on the second of them.

Vv. 6-10 form one long sentence. It begins with a prepositional phrase (v. 6a), which is followed by a parenthesis consisting of two clauses (v. 6b). The subject of the first of these clauses is a noun clause; the second clause is a simple sentence. After this parenthesis, the sentence begun before it is broken off – another anacoluthon. Instead of resuming where it left off, the sentence begins again with a simple clause (v. 6c). This is followed by a complex clause extending from v. 7 through v. 10. It begins with a participial phrase modifying the subject of the clause, on which depends a compound noun clause (v. 7). V. 8 is a parenthetical clause. The main clause resumes in v. 9a with a second participial phrase modifying the subject of the clause. This is followed by the subject and main verb of the clause along with another participial phrase modifying the subject (v. 9b). On this depend two purpose clauses (vv. 9c and 10a). The former is another compound clause; the latter is modified by a relative clause.

These sentences are ornamented in various ways. V. 4 contains two of Paul's seven new coinages, namely παρεισάκτους ψευδαδελφους. Both of these words are used metaphorically. The verb cognate to the former describes a military or political conspiracy⁽²⁸⁾; thus use of this term may present the false brothers in these terms. Calling them false brothers makes use of the metaphor of Christians as the family of God. Saying that the false brothers παρεισῆλθον κατασκοπήσαι uses the metaphor that they were engaged in infiltration and spying out⁽²⁹⁾. And

⁽²⁸⁾ BETZ, *Galatians*, 90, n. 305; MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 132, n. 61.

⁽²⁹⁾ BETZ, *Galatians*, 90; MORLAND, *Rhetoric of Curse*, 132, n. 61.

finally saying that the intention of the false brothers was καταδουλώσουσιν makes use of the metaphor of freedom vs. slavery. Thus v. 4 is one of the most ornate verses of Galatians. V. 5 includes an instance of the figure of speech pleonasm, namely in the expression εἴχομεν τη ὑποταγῇ⁽³⁰⁾.

The long sentence in vv. 6-10 also displays several ornaments. In vv. 7-9 the terms ἀκροβυστίας and περιτομῆς are used several times as metonymy for Gentiles and Jews respectively. Vv. 7-8 include instances of ellipsis since εὐαγγέλιον and ἀποστολήν are not repeated in the second part of the two verses. V. 8 includes an instance of antonomasia in that a participial phrase replaces the name of God. Finally in v. 9 στῦλοι is used metaphorically⁽³¹⁾.

Stylistically these two sentences stand out rather starkly from the rest of Galatians. Betz says vv. 6-10 is "one convoluted sentence, a strange phenomenon in the otherwise so well-composed letter"⁽³²⁾. This also applies to vv. 4-5. It is not clear whether the anacoluthon of vv. 4-5 is intentional because allusion served Paul's purpose better than explicit details, or unintentional because Paul's thought ran ahead of his dictation⁽³³⁾. We will discuss the first possibility again below. If Paul's thought ran ahead of his dictation in an otherwise notably well composed letter, we might suspect that it was because he had particularly strong feelings about the people and events he is discussing at this point⁽³⁴⁾. Although vv. 6-10 are simply complex, not incomplete, despite the anacoluthon in v. 6, the same possibilities that apply to vv. 4-5 also apply to it.

III. Plain Style in Galatians

In *On Christian Doctrine* 4 Augustine discusses the three general styles of discourse, calling them subdued, temperate and grand. These correspond to Cicero's plain, middle and full styles respectively. Augustine says that in general Galatians is subdued (i.e., plain) in style (44) and specifically cites Gal 4,21-26 and 3,15-22 as examples of this style (39). However, Gal 4,10-20 is an example of grand (i.e., full)

⁽³⁰⁾ BETZ, *Galatians*, 91 — yield by submission.

⁽³¹⁾ LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 57.

⁽³²⁾ BETZ, *Galatians*, 92.

⁽³³⁾ So DUNN, *Galatians*, 97.

⁽³⁴⁾ So J.L. MARTYN, *Galatians*. A new translation with introduction and commentary (AB 33a; New York 1997) 195.

style, and at the end Galatians rises into a temperate (i.e., middle) eloquence (44). Augustine does not specify exactly where the latter happens.

Drawing upon a number of different sources, Duane Watson describes the plain style as

“plain, to the point, explaining everything and making every point clear rather than impressive, using a refined, concise style stripped of ornament”. It is restrained, concise, avoiding long clauses which tend to elevation of style. It uses current idiom, colloquial language, avoids compound words and ambiguity, and uses natural word order. The plain style has no force or vigor, utilizes only moderate amplification, and avoids accumulation. However, it does try to be vivid through the use of *enargeia*. The plain style uses few figures and such use is subdued. Figures should be spread throughout the speech. Figures of speech are more suited than figures of thought, and when figures of thought are used they should not be glaring. Maxims are a dominant feature. Metaphors should be used most of all because they are usually colloquial, but they should be used modestly and be of a mild nature. Parisosis, homocoteleuton, paronomasia, and all figures of repetition are unsuited to the plain style because they are obvious art⁽³⁵⁾.

The most extensive discussion of the plain style is found in Demetrius, *On Style* 190-239, which is one of the sources for Watson’s description. Demetrius says that the subject of discourse in the plain style should be simple. Diction should be normal and familiar and not metaphorical (190), avoiding compounds and neologisms (191).

Above all the plain style must be clear (191). Clarity is produced by use of connectives, i.e., avoidance of asyndeton (192), by epanalepsis, i.e., resumptive repetition of a particle in the course of a long sentence (e.g., repetition of the beginning of a sentence at its end) (196), by avoiding use of dependent constructions (198), by using natural word order, i.e., beginning a sentence with either the subject or predicate (200), and by not using long periods (202).

The plain style should avoid long clauses (204). The closing words of clauses should reach a secure and perceptible end (206). It should avoid hiatus between long vowels and diphthongs; any hiatus should be between short vowels or a short and long (207). It should avoid conspicuous figures (208).

Vividness and persuasiveness are especially appropriate to the plain style (208). Vividness is produced by use of precise detail and from

⁽³⁵⁾ D.F. WATSON, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style*. Rhetorical Criticism of Jude and 2 Peter (SBLDS 104; Atlanta, GA 1988) 25-26.

omitting and excluding nothing (209), by repetition (211), by use of the past tense (214), by gradually revealing something (216), by use of circumstantial detail (217), harsh sounds (219) and onomatopoeia (220).

Persuasiveness depends on clarity and familiarity (221). Omitting some points for the listener to work out for himself involves the listener (222).

Letters should be written in plain style (223), combining the elegant style with the plain style (235).

The faulty style corresponding to the plain is the arid style (236). Arid diction is seen in narrating a great event in trivial language (237). Arid composition is seen in an unbroken series of phrases or abruptly breaking off a clause and not completing it (238).

The diction of Galatians is not particularly normal and familiar since it uses four rare words and seven neologisms. If we combine the metaphors of Galatians into basic metaphors as outlined above, it still has 15 different metaphors. It also includes as many as 27 other tropes.

2 Peter, a text written in the full or grand style, uses more rare words, i.e., ten, but fewer neologisms, i.e., four. 2 Peter has 26 metaphors and as many as 29 other tropes. Since 2 Peter is about half the length of Galatians, the two use about the same percentage of neologisms, while Galatians uses a significantly smaller percentage of rare words. Proportionately Galatians has half the number of metaphors and other tropes found in 2 Peter.

Although Galatians seems to use more neologisms than is consistent with writing in plain style, its diction is otherwise only about half as elevated as that of 2 Peter, which seems consistent with Galatians' being written in plain style. This is even more the case when we observe that many of Galatians' metaphors are highly conventional and probably had lost much of their metaphoric impact by the time Paul wrote. Perhaps it is written in the Asian version of plain style, that is, a somewhat more ornate version of the plain style⁽³⁶⁾.

Many of the things that Demetrius recommends as contributing to clarity are characteristic of Galatians. In general Paul has used connectives and avoided asyndeton. We can see asyndeton in the lack of a particle at the beginning of 3,13 and likewise in 3,28; 4,10; 4,12b; 5,4; 5,19-21 and 5,22. In 3,28 Paul probably quotes a fixed formula;

⁽³⁶⁾ Witherington also suggests that Galatians was written in Asian style (*Grace in Galatia*, 32-33). On Asian style see CALLAN, "Style of the Second Letter of Peter", 204, 216-224.

in 5,19-21 and 22 he gives lists of vices and virtues. Elsewhere Paul has used connectives in Galatians.

One instance of repetition for the sake of clarity can be seen in repetition of the conjunction *ἔπειτα* in Galatians 1,18.21; 2,1. Galatians does not make use of the type of dependent constructions Demetrius seems to find incompatible with the plain style, i.e., indirect discourse. In general it does use natural word order. However, the subject of the clause in 2,7-10 is not mentioned until v. 9, and the direct object precedes the subject in 3,8a.15.17; 5,1; 6,4.17. We have already seen that Galatians does not generally use long periods; neither does it use long clauses.

Galatians does not completely avoid hiatus between long vowels and diphthongs as Demetrius recommends. In the first 7 verses of the letter I count four instances of hiatus between diphthongs, one instance of hiatus between a diphthong and a long vowel, and one instance of hiatus between long vowels. While Galatians does include many tropes and figures, in general they are not conspicuous. However, there are some exceptions. Most obvious are the paronomasia in 5,2-3 (ὠφελήσει – ὀφειλέτης) and 5,7-8.10 (πείθεσθαι – πεισμονή – πέποιθα). The latter includes one of Paul's seven new coinages in Galatians. In these respects too, Paul may write an Asian plain style.

One passage that is particularly vivid is Gal 1,12-2,14. Throughout the passage we find an abundance of precise, circumstantial detail concerning times, places and people. The verbs in this passage are generally past tense (one exception is 1,20). The passage gradually reveals the course of Paul's life; in particular 2,6-10 gradually reveals the outcome of Paul's meeting with James, Cephas and John. All of these things contribute to vividness.

The anacoluthon in 2,4-5 might be seen as an instance of omitting something for the listeners to work out for themselves for the sake of persuasiveness. Or it might be seen as faulty composition in that a clause is abruptly broken off, perhaps because the thought is unpleasant. It is a little uncertain how the listeners were expected to complete the anacoluthon. Perhaps they were expected to supply something like "we were urged to do this, i.e., circumcise Titus" as the completion of the sentence⁽³⁷⁾. The anacoluthon in 2,6 does not require

⁽³⁷⁾ Betz (*Galatians*, 90) and Longenecker (*Galatians*, 50) suggest that readers were expected to supply "Now this happened" as the beginning of the sentence in vv. 4-5. It seems more likely that the end of the sentence is missing than that the beginning is missing whether the anacoluthon is intentional or not.

the listeners to complete it because Paul begins the sentence again and completes it himself.

More than the rest of Galatians, 2,4-10 resembles ordinary speech with its anacolutha. This is appropriate for a letter, which is like one side of a dialogue (Demetrius, 223). But perhaps this is too close an approximation of ordinary speech to be suitable for a letter (226). Elsewhere Galatians may resemble ordinary speech in other ways more than Demetrius would consider appropriate, e.g., abundant use of questions.

IV. The Grand and Middle Styles in Galatians

According to Augustine, the subdued (i.e., plain) style can be used longer without variety than the grand style; however, all three styles should be mingled (*On Christian Doctrine* 4.51). As we have noted above, Augustine thinks Paul has done this in Galatians. Augustine sees Gal 4,10-20 as an example of grand style. He considers the passage an instance of grand style, despite an absence of ornament, because of its depth of feeling. Augustine asks,

Is there anything here of contrasted words arranged antithetically, or of words rising gradually to a climax, or of sonorous clauses, and sections, and periods? Yet, notwithstanding, there is a glow of strong emotion that makes us feel the fervor of eloquence (*On Christian Doctrine* 4.20.44).

It is true that this passage is not highly ornamented. However, it is not completely lacking in ornament. The passage makes use of the metaphor of the family of God in vv. 12 and 19. We also find the trope hyperbole in v. 15, the figures of speech asyndeton (v. 12b), elimination (v. 14), transplacement (vv. 17-18), and the figure of thought questions in vv. 15 and 16.

Augustine also says that Galatians rises to a temperate eloquence at the end, though he does not identify the specific section of the letter that he has in mind. Perhaps he is thinking of 5,1-6,10.

The first part of this section, namely 5,1-24, is rather highly ornamented. Two of Paul's new coinages are found in vv. 8 and 20. The metaphor of the family of God is used in vv. 11,13 and 21; the metaphor of freedom vs. slavery is used in vv. 1 and 13; the metaphor of running and walking is used in vv. 7 and 16; the metaphor of crucifixion is used in v. 24; and an agricultural metaphor is used in v. 22. Other metaphors occur in vv. 3,4,15 and 21.

In addition to these metaphors 5,1-24 includes other tropes. We find antonomasia in v. 8, hyperbaton in vv. 4 and 7-8, hyperbole in v. 15 and metonymy in vv. 5 and 12. We find the figures of speech anadiplosis in 4,31-5,1, asyndeton in vv. 4, 19-21 and 22, chiasm in v. 17, ellipsis in vv. 4 and 17, elimination in v. 6, paronomasia in vv. 2-3 and 7-8, a proverb in v. 9, and transplacement in vv. 7-8. We also find the figures of thought antithesis in v. 17, questions in vv. 7 and 11, and understatement in vv. 8a and 23b.

5,25-6,10 is also ornamented, but less so than 5,1-24. In the former passage Paul uses one of his rare words in 6,3. He uses the metaphor of the family of God in 6,10, the metaphor of running and walking in 5,25, an agricultural metaphor in 6,7-9, and another metaphor in 6,2 and 5. We also find the figures of speech chiasm in 5,25 and 6,8, and a proverb in 6,7. As we have noted above, Betz sees 5,25-6,10 as a series of *sententiae* ⁽³⁸⁾.

V. Implications of Stylistic Analysis for Interpretation of Galatians

Reflection on the style of Galatians makes us aware that for the most part it is carefully written in plain style. This implies that it intends above all to form the minds of the Galatians both by communicating knowledge and by presenting convincing arguments. Adapting the teaching of Cicero, Augustine says that the subdued (i.e., plain) style should be used to teach (*docere*; Cicero says *probere* "prove"), the temperate (i.e., middle) style to delight, and the grand (i.e., full) style to move the hearer (*On Christian Doctrine* 4.27, 34). The subdued style should be used when addressing knotty questions, and the temperate style for praise and blame (52). Obviously, the grand style should be used to shape the will.

I would argue that the pleading section of the letter (4,12-6,10) begins with 4,12-20. It is here that Paul makes his main request of the addressees. The grand style is appropriate as Paul attempts to move the Galatians to grant his request. The middle style is appropriate to the latter part of the pleading section, where Paul elaborates his plea, presuming that he has won the Galatians over.

Reflection on the style of Galatians also calls attention to the prominence of metaphors in Galatians. The most common metaphors are thoroughly conventional and so probably used without special

⁽³⁸⁾ BETZ, *Galatians*, 291.

awareness of them as metaphors⁽³⁹⁾. The one exception to this is metaphorical use of crucifixion⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Although the metaphors Paul uses most often in Galatians are conventional, they are central to the argument of Galatians⁽⁴¹⁾. One indication of their importance for Paul is that two of his new coinages develop the metaphors of the family of God and running/walking, namely *πενδοαδελφους* in 2,4 and *ορθοποδοουσιν* in 2,14. Another indication is that, as we have noted above, Paul's unconventional

⁽³⁹⁾ R. Aasgaard has shown that metaphorical use of family language was common in antiquity, above all among Jews (*"My Beloved Brothers and Sisters!"* Christian Siblingship in Paul [Early Christianity in Context; JSNTSS 265; London 2004] 107-116); see also P.A. HARLAND, "Familial Dimensions of Group Identity: 'Brothers' (*Ἀδελφοί*) in Associations of the Greek East", *JBL* 124 (2005) 491-513; and T. CALLAN, *Psychological Perspectives on the Life of Paul*. An Application of the Methodology of Gerd Theissen (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 22; Lewiston – Queenston – Lampeter 1990) 83-92. On use of slavery as a metaphor see I.A.H. COMBES, *The Metaphor of Slavery in the Writings of the Early Church*. From the New Testament to the Beginning of the Fifth Century (JSNTSS 156; Sheffield 1998) 43-48. Combes observes that slavery is used in the OT as positive image of relationship with God (pp. 43-44); this use is limited in the Hellenic world (pp. 44-45). It is used in the OT as a negative image of idolatry, but not of being mastered by passions, etc. (pp. 45-46); the latter is common in the Hellenic world (pp. 46-48). On use of running as an image for spiritual achievement in the Greek world see O. BAUERNFEIND, "*τρέχω κτλ*", *TDNT*, VIII, 228-229; as part of his discussion of athletic imagery in general V.C. Pfizner (*Paul and the Agon Motif*. Traditional Athletic Imagery in the Pauline Literature [NTS 16; Leiden 1967] 23-75) discusses use of running as an image on pages 31, 49-51. According to H. Seeseman and G. Bertram ("*πατέω κτλ*", *TDNT* V, 940-945) use of walking as an image for the conduct of life is alien to classical Greek (p. 941) but frequent in the Septuagint (pp. 942-943). According to F. Hauck fruit is used as an image for "product", "result", or "gain" in secular Greek, the Septuagint and later Jewish literature ("*καρπός κτλ*", *TDNT* III, 614-615). Sowing is used metaphorically in the Greek world in general and by Philo in particular (S. Schulz and G. QUELL, "*σπέρμα κτλ*", *TDNT* VII, 537, 544); likewise reaping is used as an image of consequences in secular and Jewish Greek (F. HAUCK, "*θερίζω κτλ*", *TDNT* III, 132-133).

⁽⁴⁰⁾ According to Hengel (*Crucifixion*, 66-68) crucifixion is not used metaphorically at all in the non-Christian Greek world and is only used as a negative metaphor in the Latin world. A positive use of crucifixion as a metaphor that is somewhat different than Paul's use is found in the sayings of Jesus in Mark 8,34-35 / Matt 16,24-25 / Luke 9,23-24 (cf. the parallel to the second verse in John 12,25) and Matt 10,38-39 / Luke 14,27 & 17,33.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Aasgaard speaks of "the frequency, the intensity, the variation, and the conscious ways" Paul has used the family metaphors in his letters (*Beloved Brothers and Sisters*, 306).

metaphorical use of crucifixion is closely related to the metaphor of freedom v. slavery, which in turn is connected with the metaphor of the family of God. To a great extent Paul argues that the Galatians should not keep the Jewish law by arguing that to do so is to return to slavery after having been set free, and to return to the slave-like condition of a minor child after reaching maturity. Paradoxically, this condition of freedom has resulted from crucifixion with Christ, i.e., suffering along with him a form of death especially associated with slaves, and can be called slavery to Christ and to other Christians⁽⁴²⁾. In Galatians Paul does not explain why he considers this slavery true freedom⁽⁴³⁾.

Thus Paul makes his argument in Galatians (in part) by elaborating some conventional metaphors. A striking exception is his use of the metaphor of crucifixion with Christ. In his other letters Paul often says in various ways that Christians have died with Christ. However, he does not generally specify this as crucifixion with Christ; the one other instance of this is Rom 6,6. In Galatians he speaks of crucifixion with Christ in three different passages.

A striking development of the family of God metaphor is Paul's presentation of himself as the mother of the Galatians who is in labor with them a second time so that Christ may be formed in them. This is a powerful image of the Galatians' perversity. Having been born in Christ, they have crawled back into the womb and must be born again if they are to reach the goal of their existence. It is also a powerful and surprising image of Paul's role in countering the Galatians' perversity. He is their mother who has already brought them to birth once and is doing so again as he tries to dissuade them from taking on the yoke of the law. And finally it is a powerful expression of Paul's understanding of faith in Christ as a matter of union with Christ. To believe in Christ is to undergo a new birth in which Christ is formed in the believer⁽⁴⁴⁾.

⁽⁴²⁾ On Paul's use of the slave metaphor in this positive sense, see COMBES, *Metaphor of Slavery*, 77-94; TSANG, *From Slaves to Sons*, 70-80. Combes argues that Paul uses the slave metaphor in this way because he sees Christians as united with the crucified and risen Christ.

⁽⁴³⁾ For an explanation see R. BULTMANN, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York 1951) I, 331-332.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ On this passage see CALLAN, *Psychological Perspectives*, 86-87; B.R. GAVENTA, "The Maternity of Paul: An Exegetical Study of Galatians 4:19", *The Conversation Continues*. Studies in Paul and John. In Honor of J. Louis Martyn (eds. R.T. FORTNA – B.R. GAVENTA) (Nashville 1990) 189-201, reprinted in B.R. GAVENTA *Our Mother Saint Paul* (Louisville, KY 2007) 29-40; WILLIAMS, *Paul's Metaphors*, 56-57.

Reflection on the style of Galatians also focuses attention on 2,1-10 because it differs from the rest of the letter stylistically. As we have seen above, this section of Galatians is not as clearly and simply composed as the rest of the letter; it is also one of the most ornate sections of the letter. This suggests that the meeting in Jerusalem described in these verses may have been the most problematic part of Paul's life for his argument that his apostleship is not human in origin. It may be problematic simply because Paul seemed to submit to the judgment of the Jerusalem "pillars" or also because it was interpreted this way in Galatia.

For some reason Paul is not able to make his argument clearly and simply in recounting this episode of his life. As we have seen above, it is possible that the way Paul recounts the episode is the way that best served his purpose. On the other hand, it is possible that the stylistic divergence from the rest of Galatians derives from Paul's strong emotional relationship with this episode. In either case, the style of 2,1-10 shows the importance of the section in the letter.

This discussion of the style of Galatians has confirmed the view of Betz and others that Paul's letter to the Galatians is thoroughly informed by contemporary rhetorical practice. Robert Jewett's recent commentary on Romans shows that this is equally true of Romans⁽⁴⁵⁾.

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SUMMARY

Especially since the publication of H. D. Betz's commentary in 1979 much attention has been given to rhetorical analysis of Paul's letter to the Galatians. Discussion has focused on the species of Galatians' rhetoric, i.e., whether it is forensic, deliberative or epideictic; little attention has been given to its style. This paper is an attempt to supply that lack. It begins by describing stylistic ornamentation of Galatians with respect to vocabulary and syntax and proceeds to discuss the presence of plain, middle and grand styles in Galatians. Finally it considers the implications of stylistic analysis for interpretation of Galatians.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ R. JEWETT, *Romans. A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN 2006).

ANIMADVERSIONES

Ἐξ ἑνός in Hebrews 2,11

The phrase Ἐξ ἑνός in Hebrews 2,11 is interpreted in ways which are as varied as they are perdurable⁽¹⁾. So varied and so perdurable, in fact, that one may be pardoned, perhaps, in thinking of them as permanent parts of the exegetical landscape. But resignation in the face of difficulty is defeatism by another name. It would seem preferable to launch regular attempts at explanations in the hope that trust in the intelligibility of the author of Hebrews may be vindicated sooner or later.

The present article is such an attempt. The method involved may be sanguinely described as a “close reading”.

1. *The State of the Question*

The suggestions made as to the identify of the “one” indicated by the word ἑνός are varied. Some of the principal ones are⁽²⁾: 1) one substance or race; 2) one priestly lineage; 3) one source, i.e., God; 4) one origin, i.e., Adam; 5) one ancestor, i.e., Abraham; 6) one transcendent Gnostic world. These interpretations are supported by arguments based on the context⁽³⁾. This, of course, is the proper way to proceed. But those who advance differing interpretations invoke the same context. Since there is such a variety of interpretations, each plausible, depending on what elements of the context are chosen, it seems necessary to establish a context which would measurably enhance the plausibility of any interpretation based on it⁽⁴⁾. And since the crux seems so intractable, any suggested solution will probably have to appear out of the ordinary, idiosyncratic even. But conventional suggestions based on conventional suppositions would seem to have failed. Something unconventional seems called for.

⁽¹⁾ The text in the article which follows is that of Nestle–Aland²⁷. Translations are by the present writer.

⁽²⁾ Cf. H.W. ATTRIDGE, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Philadelphia 1989) 88–89.

⁽³⁾ Cf., for example, W.L. LANE, *Hebrews 1–8* (WBC 47; Dallas 1991) 58: “The contextual references to God in v 10 and to the family relationship in v 11...tend to support the contention that ἑνός is masculine and has reference to God.... Both the Son and those who are sons share a common familial relationship that is rooted in the gracious determination of God to bring his children to their destiny through the redemptive mission of the Son...”.

⁽⁴⁾ In what follows the present writer is going to attempt to arrive at a plausible interpretation of Ἐξ ἑνός and nothing more. No “proof” is envisaged. Perhaps another close reading of the context of Heb 2,11 can yield an interpretation different from the one being advanced here. All that will be claimed is that, considering one close reading of the context of 2,11, the proposed interpretation is plausible.

2. The Structure in Which Hebrews 2,11 Occurs

Context is determined in no small part by structure or lack of structure. Hebrews is no exception. The present writer has suggested the following structure for Heb 1,1–3,6⁽⁵⁾:

- 1,1–4: exordium to the entire epistle and to what immediately follows;
- 1,5–14: an exposition on Jesus as Son [of God];
- 2,1–4: *paraklesis* ⁽⁶⁾ based on the preceding exposition;
- 2,5–18: an exposition on Jesus as Son of Man;
- 3,1–6: *paraklesis* based on the preceding exposition.

Both 1,5–14 and 2,5–18 have their own substructure. It is the latter substructure which is of concern in the present article. 2,5–18 seems to be best interpreted as a commentary on Ps 8,5–7 which is found at Heb 2,6–8a. Accordingly, comments on the psalm begin at Heb 2,6b and extend to 2,12. This latter verse, a quotation from Ps 22,22, seems best taken as a summation of what precedes. Heb 2,13b, on the other hand, seems best taken as an introduction to what follows until 2,18. That leaves Heb 2,13a, which is a citation from the Septuagint version of Isa 8,17: “I shall be trusting in him”. In the context of Hebrews these words are meant to be interpreted as the words of Jesus. Being in the center of the substructure 2,6–18 they seem best taken as a summation both of what precedes and what follows. That is to say, the entire subsection is to be interpreted as being marked by the faith-trust of Jesus in some way or another.

It is important to note that this faith-trust of Jesus is predicated of Jesus as Son of Man, not as Son [of God]. It would be nonsense to affirm that Jesus as God has faith-trust in God. In what way did Jesus as man have faith-trust? This question is answered in the context in connection with the fact that Jesus as man can die. Having faith-trust goes in tandem with death. In fact, in Heb 2,18 Jesus is said to have been “tested” (πειράζω) at the time of his “suffering” (πάσχω), i.e., during his passion preparatory to his death. The temptation is graphically illustrated in Heb 12,2–3: a temptation not to have faith-trust in God⁽⁷⁾.

“For in what he suffered, after having been put to the test⁽⁸⁾, he is able to help those being tested” (2,18) says implicitly what 2,15 says explicitly: by his example at the moment of his death Jesus is able to free others from the fear of death to the extent that they have faith-trust in him, i.e., to the extent that they accept him as worthy of trust⁽⁹⁾. The following verse (2,16) makes explicit the formality of those who lived a life-long fear of death: the “seed”

⁽⁵⁾ J. SWETNAM, “Abraham’s Seed and Isaac as Promise: A Study of Hebrews 2,16 and 11,11 in the Context of Hebrews”, *Melita Theologica* 56 (2005) 53–56; J. SWETNAM, “The Structure of Hebrews 1,1–3,6”, *Melita Theologica* 43 (1992) 58–66.

⁽⁶⁾ For the meaning of παράκλησις cf. P. ELLINGWORTH, *The Epistle to the Hebrews. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids – Carlisle 1993) 343.

⁽⁷⁾ “The content of the ‘test’ [sc., in Heb 2,18] will be graphically portrayed at 12:2–3, in a way that clearly suggests its paradigmatic relevance to Christ’s followers. The testing in view is not located in the temptations of Jesus, but in his suffering” (ATTRIDGE, *Hebrews*, 96).

⁽⁸⁾ For a suggestion as to the moment of the testing of Jesus’ faith in connection with his passion cf. J. SWETNAM, “The Crux at Hebrews 5,7–8”, *Bib* 81 (2000) 354–356.

⁽⁹⁾ Cf. πιστός at 2,17.

(σπέρμα) of Abraham, not angels. Angels cannot die, but the descendants of Abraham can.

The precise force of σπέρμα in the context is normally not deemed worth discussing, inasmuch as most commentators presume that the word refers to Abraham's physical descendants. But in the light of the structure of the passage, given the thematic relevance of 2,13a, the word is best taken as referring to Abraham's spiritual descendants⁽¹⁰⁾. Jesus is "taking in hand" (ἐπιλαμβάνομαι) Abraham's spiritual descendants to give them his own distinctive faith-trust in addition to the faith-trust which characterized Abraham at the moment of his supreme test of faith. For Abraham was faced not with his own personal death but with the death of his son Isaac. He passed this test, and all who imitate his faith-trust can be considered his spiritual children. But with Jesus comes the additional factor of faith-trust in the face of one's own death. Hence Jesus, who came to share in the faith-trust of Abraham's spiritual children because he took on their blood and flesh (cf. 2,14), adds something distinctive, something which the example of Abraham did not give. Implied in the taking on of the capacity of dying is all that is involved in facing death, as 2,18 makes clear. Jesus was a spiritual child of Abraham by the very fact that he took on a mortal body in the context of Jewish tradition. But to this faith-trust which imitated the faith-trust of Abraham in the face of the imminent death of his son⁽¹¹⁾, Jesus added his own distinctive faith-trust. This seems to be the implication of his "taking in hand" the seed of Abraham: he identified with the seed of Abraham, but he added something new.

This, then, is the structural background in which Heb 2,8b-12, the immediate context of ἐξ ἐνός at Heb 2,11, is found.

3. *The Immediate Context of ἐξ ἐνός at Hebrews 2,11*

The immediate context of Heb 2,11 is found in the section 2,8b-13a. 2,8b begins immediately after the quotation of Ps 8, 5-7. In fact, the verse echoes the final words of the psalm by emphasizing that God has placed all things under Jesus' feet, though not all things have been *visibly* placed under his feet (2,8bc). But what Christians *do* see (with the eyes of faith) is Jesus crowned with glory and honor through the suffering of death⁽¹²⁾. That is to say, in this sub-section the author of Hebrews has the risen Jesus in mind. From this vantage point, looking back on the sub-section 2,13a-18, it is possible to see that in this sub-section the author of Hebrews has the earthly Jesus in mind: he is looking at the earthly Jesus from the standpoint of the risen Jesus, a standpoint he establishes in 2,8b-13a. According to the structure being suggested here, this means that Jesus' faith-trust in 2,8b-13a has been answered at the resurrection, whereas Jesus' faith-trust in 2,13b-18 is being looked at as not yet having been answered.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Cf. J. SWETNAM, *Jesus and Isaac. A Study of the Epistle to the Hebrews in the Light of the Aqedah* (AB 94; Rome 1981) 136.

⁽¹¹⁾ Cf. the use of περάζω at Heb 11,17.

⁽¹²⁾ The enigmatic crux constituted by the words ὅπως χάριτι θεοῦ ὑπὲρ πάντος γεύσεται θανάτου must for the moment remain enigmatic. An attempt to explain them will be given below.

Heb 2,10 follows on v. 9 with the illative particle γάρ. V. 9 affirms the fact of the resurrection as perceived by faith; v. 10 affirms the suitability of how the resurrection came about by asserting that it was "fitting" that God "perfect" (τελειώω) Jesus the "son" through suffering as he led many "sons" to glory. This verse is unintelligible except in the light of an explanation of its underlying suppositions. God is pictured as the one on account of whom everything happens and for the sake of whom everything happens (ὁὖ ὃν τὰ πάντα καὶ δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα), i.e., he is in absolute control of all reality including death. He could have spared his son the necessity of suffering, but it was not fitting that he do so, for the son had entered the world precisely in order to die, and he had come to take in hand the spiritual children of Abraham who lived by faith-trust. Jesus is looked on as "son", and hence by inference he is *the* son as opposed to the many sons who are being led into glory because of this son⁽¹³⁾. The use of the aorist participle, ἀγαγόντα, is best taken as coinciding with the moment in time expressed by the verb τελειῶσαι⁽¹⁴⁾. The aorist seems to be "global" or "confective": as God "perfects" the son he also in principle "perfects" the sons⁽¹⁵⁾.

The precise nature of this act of God by which he "perfects" the son is, of course, much discussed⁽¹⁶⁾. It would seem at least to relate to the Old Testament use of τελειώω which indicates the consecration of the Levitical priests as portrayed in the language of the Septuagint⁽¹⁷⁾. But in Hebrews the word is adjusted to the ontological significance of the priesthood of Jesus rooted in his ontological bloody death. When Jesus assumed a mortal body at the moment of his entering into the world (Heb 10,5-7) he became ontologically "equipped", so to speak, for the main earthly task of his priesthood, sacrificial death (cf. Heb 2,13b-18). Just so, when Jesus assumes an immortal body at the moment of his entering into God's glory, he became ontologically "equipped", so to speak, for the heavenly task of his priesthood. Thus there are, in effect, two stages to the one priesthood of Christ, his earthly priesthood and his heavenly priesthood. The moment of his transition from the first to the second would thus seem to be the moment of "perfecting", when the earthly priesthood is brought to the perfection of the heavenly priesthood. Thus the Old Testament terminology involving priestly

⁽¹³⁾ This verse tends to support the view that in the citation of Ps 8 given at Heb 2,6-8a Jesus is viewed as indicated by the phrase "Son of Man". A number of exegetes hold this view (cf. ATTRIDGE, *Hebrews*, 73, n. 38).

⁽¹⁴⁾ "Und stehen die beiden Verben in beiden Sätzen, das Partizip ἀγαγόντα und der Infinitiv τελειῶσαι, im Aorist, so sind sie beide auch auf denselben Vorgang und auf dasselbe logische Subjekt zu beziehen" (H.-F. WEIB, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* (KKNT 13; Göttingen 1991) 206).

⁽¹⁵⁾ Cf. WEIB, *Brief an die Hebräer*, 206, n. 7. The thought that at the "perfecting" of Christ many other sons are "perfected" seems to be reflected in Heb 12,23.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Cf. ATTRIDGE, *Hebrews*, 83-87 (Excursus: "The Language of Perfection").

⁽¹⁷⁾ "The statement that Jesus was 'perfected through suffering' draws upon a special nuance of the verb τελειοῦν in the LXX. In ceremonial texts of the Pentateuch the verb is used to signify the act of consecrating a priest to his office (Exod 29:9, 29, 33, 35; Lev 4:5; 8:33; 16:32; 21:10; Num 3:3). The normal idiom is 'to fill the hands' (τελειοῦν τὰς χεῖρας), and in Exod 29:33 this expression is elucidated by the verb ἀγιαξεν, to consecrate, to qualify someone for priestly service" (LANE, *Hebrews*, 57).

consecration is pressed into service by the author of Hebrews to indicate a specifically New Testament reality. Just what the function of this heavenly high priest is will be indicated in Heb 2,12.

4. A Proposed Solution to the Meaning of Ἐξ ἑνός

This is the immediate antecedent context of Ἐξ ἑνός in Heb 2,11. In this context the precise wording of Heb 2,11 is instructive. "For both the one sanctifying (ἀγιάζων) and the ones being sanctified (ἀγιαζόμενοι) are all from one (Ἐξ ἑνός); for this reason he is not ashamed to call them brothers". The illative particle "for" (γάρ) seems to refer to the phrase "through sufferings" (διὰ παθημάτων) in v. 10. The idea of the "perfecting" seems to be a given, the point being made that this perfecting had to be done through sufferings, i.e., death. The reason for this interpretation lies in the use of "it was fitting" combined with the presence of "on account of whom and for the sake of whom everything happens" and "in leading many sons to glory". God is all-powerful and the goal for all human existence; he could have dispensed Jesus from death to achieve Jesus' personal goal of entering into honor and glory, i.e., God's own world of existence, for Jesus was personally without sin (Heb 7,26). But because the son involved the sons and their goals of entering into honor and glory, God had Jesus suffer death because they had to suffer death, given that death had entered their world through sin. Jesus' role as "originator of their [i.e., the sons'] salvation" makes it fitting that the son endure what the sons have to endure to achieve their goals, i.e., death.

It is on this precise point that the phrase Ἐξ ἑνός seems to bear: both the son and the sons are "from one". It would seem at first sight that the "one" refers to the physical body of both son and sons which permits them to die. But that is not what 2,13b-18 says. The quality which Jesus is taking in hand of the children which God has given him is their quality as members of Abraham's seed. It is their faith-trust which links Jesus and the "children". The fact that the children have mortal bodies is simply the basis for the exercise of this faith-trust. This emerges from the wording of 2,18: the high priest Jesus is able to help the children because he was "tested" and having passed the test, is trustworthy and thus able to help the sons pass their test. The phrase Ἐξ ἑνός is about faith-trust. But not just the faith-trust which constituted a spiritual child of Abraham before the coming of Jesus, but the faith-trust which constitutes a spiritual child after the perfecting of Jesus. The phrase "from one" in Heb 2,11, implies that to the faith-trust of the children of Abraham which they enjoyed *before* the coming of Jesus must now be added the faith-trust of Jesus which they enjoy *after* the perfecting of Jesus. The "one" referred to in Heb 2,11 is the "seed" of Abraham but under a new formality. This spiritual seed remains the seed of Abraham, but it is now constituted not only by the faith-trust of Abraham, but by faith-trust in the risen Jesus as well. Hence the choice of the numeral "one": it designate the unity of the two faith-trusts which results. This "Christian seed" of Abraham is composed of two realities which form a new functional unity, the faith-trust of Abraham and the faith-trust of Christ.

This Christian seed of two faith-trusts is the basis for the "sanctifying" which Jesus is engaged in. In his glorified state Christ is in a position to

exercise the divine prerogative of making holy. But he does this on the basis of the faith-trust which Abraham exercised, as brought to perfection in the faith-trust which he himself exercised. This faith-trust, though composed of two faith-trusts, functions as one, because it is faith-trust in the face of death. It is a unique faith-trust in God which is based on Abraham's faith-trust as brought to a God-willed perfection in the faith-trust of Jesus.

This new faith-trust reality brought about by Christ seems to be involved in the statement in v. 10 that Jesus is the "originator of their [i.e., the sons'] salvation" (ὁ ἀρχηγός τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν). The only other time the word ἀρχηγός is used in Hebrews is at 12,2, where Jesus is said to be "the originator and perfecter of faith" (ὁ τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸς καὶ τελειωτής). This seems to be an allusion to the distinctive faith-trust of Jesus in addition to the faith-trust he had in God as a child of Abraham in imitation of Abraham. As earthly high priest Jesus originated this distinctive faith-trust in the face of death; as one raised by God from the dead he brought it to perfection. With regard to his role as originator of salvation, the relevant text would seem to be Heb 2,3, where Jesus is portrayed as the being the one through whom [a great] "salvation had its beginning of being spoken" ([σωτηρία] ἥτις ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα λαλεῖσθαι διὰ τοῦ κυρίου).

In Heb 2,11 the fact that Jesus as sanctifier and the Christians as those being sanctified are "from one" is given as the reason why Jesus is not ashamed to call those being sanctified "brothers" (ἀδελφοί). This is explained by 2,12: 'Ἀπαγγελῶ τὸ ὄνομά σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου, ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ὑμνήσω σε ("I shall announce your name to my brothers, in the midst of the assembly I shall sing your praises"). This is well known as a citation of Ps 22,22. What is not as well known is the fact that at this point in the psalm the whole tone of the psalm changes from one of distress to one of triumph. At the beginning of this song of triumph is a reference to the ceremony of the *tôdâ*⁽¹⁸⁾. The *tôdâ* is a ceremony used in connection with worship in the temple in Jerusalem which consisted of three principal parts: 1) a bloody sacrifice of an animal offered by priests in the temple; 2) a parallel ceremony involving the ritual consumption of bread; 3) public praise and thanksgiving in hymns and prayers accompanying the ritual consumption of bread. The one

⁽¹⁸⁾ "The language of vv. 23-27 [sc., of Ps 22] is based on the custom whereby a person who offered a thanksgiving sacrifice in the temple would recount to his fellow worshippers the favor received from God and then invite them to share in his sacrificial banquet" (*The New American Bible* [1970] 616). (Verse 23 is according to the Hebrew numbering of the verses, the same as verse 22 in the Septuagint.) In reference to the Hebrew text of Ps 22,23-24 cf. the remarks of H.-J. KRAUS, *Psalmen*. 1 Teilband. Psalmen 1-59 (BKAT, XV/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1978⁵). 330: "לֹא־אֶפְתָּח פִּי לְמַלְכוּת עֲוֹנוֹתַי" ist nicht die Formel eines Gelübdes der Klage in seinem Leid ablegt, sondern bereits der Einsatz des Dank- und Lobliedes (Ps 66,16; 109,30; 107,32). – Als einzigen Inhalt seines Liedes vor der Kultgemeinde (קָדָשׁ) nennt der Sänger den שׁ Jahwes. שׁ ist die gegenwärtige Heilsmacht Jahwes (vgl. zu Ps 20,2.6.8). Die Zuhörer des Liedes sind אֲדָמִי = die Kultgenossen der Israelgemeinde (4). Zu קָדָשׁ als Begriff für die versammelte Kultgemeinde vgl. Ps 35,18; Ex 16,3; Lev 4,13ff.21; Nu 10,7; 15,15; 17,1; 20,6 u. ö. – In den Lobgesang einstimmen sollen alle, die Jahwes Wirklichkeit erfahren haben (יִרְאֵי יְהוָה). In diesem Zusammenhang haben die Konstruktsbildungen זָרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל und זָרַע יְהוָה die Bedeutung, das 'wahre Israels' zum Lobpreis aufzurufen. 24b betont das Erschrecken vor dem Wunder, in dem Jahwe seine Gegenwart bekundet".

officiating in the ceremonies of the bread and prayers/hymns need not be a priest⁽¹⁹⁾. The motive behind such a ceremony was the belief of the one sponsoring it that he had received a signal favor of God in being spared, for example, in war or in famine, or that he firmly believed that such a divine favor would take place. The ceremony, in other words, is based on faith-trust.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews the *tôdâ* is mentioned in its Greek Septuagint translation, *θυσία αἰνέσεως* at Heb 13,15. A plausible argument can be mounted that Heb 13,1-21 is organized on the basis of the Christian adaptation of the *tôdâ*, i.e., the Eucharist⁽²⁰⁾.

Given this presumed familiarity of the author of Hebrews with the *tôdâ*, there is nothing forced in presuming that he referred to the *tôdâ* in its Christian form in Heb 2,12⁽²¹⁾. In its Christian form, of course, the *tôdâ* is modified in important respects. The bloody death of an animal in the temple is replaced by the bloody death of Christ outside the temple; it is a unique death, as the author of Hebrews states clearly, for Jesus died only once (Heb 9,28). The bread of the *tôdâ* becomes the Eucharistic bread. The hymns and prayers are the hymns and prayers attendant on the Eucharist. In Heb 2,12 the citation from Ps 22 portrays the psalmist who has been delivered from his foes in a definitive way. His expressions of faith-trust in the earlier part of the psalm (vv. 4-6, 10-12) have been heard. This is the background for the citation of Ps 22 at Heb 2,12: the risen Jesus is summoning the assembly for his public performance of the Christian *tôdâ*. The members of the assembly he calls "brothers" (ἀδελφοί).

Against the background of Heb 2,12 it is useful to work back over the passage 2,8b-18 to see the plausible relevance of the Christian *tôdâ*⁽²²⁾.

The one calling for the Christian *tôdâ* is the risen Christ. He wishes to share the joy of his resurrection, of his having being heard by God, with all those who share in the faith-trust which he had and which he still has. His brothers have their faith-trust in the face of deaths which have not yet occurred; Jesus has had his faith-trust vindicated and wishes to celebrate this vindication so that his brothers can be strengthened in the face of death (Heb 2,14-15). This unity which serves as the common denominator between Jesus and his brothers is precisely a unity consisting of faith-trust, and it constitutes the common bond between them and him as they worship at the Christian *θυσία αἰνέσεως* and he officiates as heavenly high priest. This is the same unity which Jesus found as he assumed his role of one coming to the aid of Abraham's spiritual seed, i.e., all those who, like Abraham, had faith-trust in God. But the spiritual seed of Abraham referred to in the Christian *tôdâ* or *θυσία αἰνέσεως* is enriched by the faith-trust of Jesus, now brought to a perfect vindication⁽²³⁾.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Cf. H. GESE, "Der Herkunft des Herrenmahls", *Zur biblischen Theologie. Alttestamentliche Vorträge* (Tübingen 1989) 107-127.

⁽²⁰⁾ Cf. J. SWETNAM, "A Liturgical Approach to Hebrews 13", *The Incarnate Word* 1 (2006) 3-17. The Latin form of *θυσία αἰνέσεως* (*sacrificium laudis*) is found in the Canon of the Latin Mass in the remembrance of the living.

⁽²¹⁾ Cf. also J. SWETNAM, "The Crux at Hebrews 5,7-8", *Bib* 81 (2000) 354-356.

⁽²²⁾ Remembering, of course, that no attempt at proof is being made, only an attempt to sketch a plausible interpretation to *try* to understand the expression Ἐξ ἑνός in v. 11.

⁽²³⁾ The distinctive contribution of Jesus to the faith-trust of Abraham is probably

This faith-trust is the basis for the work of sanctification being achieved by the risen Christ (v. 11) in the Christian *tôdâ*. It is the work of Christ the heavenly high priest. Christ's heavenly high priesthood was made possible with relation to his earthly priesthood by the ontological change which has taken place in his body as a result of his being perfected. This perfection took place at the moment of his entrance into God's glory as son (v. 10). Christ's entrance was achieved definitively at the moment of his resurrection; the entrance of the sons was achieved at the moment of Christ's resurrection but only in principle, with the need for this entrance to be worked out in time. Christ's heavenly priesthood is the perfection of his earthly priesthood, i.e., it "absorbs" this earthly priesthood so that the saving effects of Christ's unique death are conserved in his presiding at the Christian *tôdâ*. The one sacrificial death of Jesus is, through the risen Christ, applicable in all celebrations of the Christian *tôdâ*.

Christ is the originator of salvation of Christians (v. 10) in the sense that he established the Eucharist: Heb 2,10 throws light on Heb 2,3 where the great salvation for Christians, as opposed to the giving of the Sinai Law, had its beginning of being spoken through the Lord⁽²⁴⁾.

Finally the fact that one of the underlying suppositions of the passage is the fact of the Christian *tôdâ* or Eucharist explains why, in v. 9, Jesus is portrayed as dying and crowned with glory and honor so that he may taste death (ὅπως χάριτι θεοῦς ὑπὲρ παντός γεύσῃται θανάτου): he dies and is glorified so that he may preside as heavenly high priest in the liturgical banquet by which he sanctifies and by which Christians are sanctified in the context of his realized faith-trust and their faith-trust which has still to be put to the test.

Thus a close reading of Heb 2,8b-18 seems to establish a plausible case for the phrase ἐξ ἐνός. It means the seed of Abraham, but with the faith-trust of Jesus included so that what emerges is a functioning unity based on faith-trust in the face of death.

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Such, then, is an interpretation of Heb 2,11 which presumes to present a plausible solution to crux in question. At 2,11 Christ's faith-trust is viewed as an addition to the faith-trust of Abraham but in such a way that the faith-trust of both him and of Abraham form a unity. And this basic unity is not detrimental in any way to its being shared by the Christians, as 2,11 states

portrayed at Heb 12,2, where Jesus is presented as the "originator and perfecter of the faith". In his role as earthly high priest he originated this faith-trust in the face of his own death; in his role as heavenly high priest he brings this faith to perfection. But he does this while not losing the identity which he came to share with Abraham's seed, those who are spiritual descendants of Abraham because they share in the heroic faith-trust which he showed at the moment of his being tested at the Aqedah.

(²⁴) Cf. SWETNAM, "The Structure of Hebrews 1,1-3,6", 62. The precise force of "salvation" (σωτηρία) as opposed to "redemption" (ἀπολύτρωσις) in Hebrews needs elucidation. Salvation seems to be already possessed by the addressees, at least in principle, through their union with Christ (cf. Heb 3,6 and 3,14).

unequivocally. All of which is viewed as background for the participation of both Jesus and his followers in the Christian *tôdâ* which is the Eucharist.

The way to this conclusion, it need not be emphasized, was indirect and tentative. All that can be claimed from the “close reading” given above is that it seems plausible, given a certain set of suppositions. Other sets of suppositions are doubtless also possible. But the presentation given above does not lack a certain coherence. Given the problems involved in the text, not to mention the crux, this would seem the most that can be hoped for, barring a presentation which leads to a greater plausibility ⁽²⁵⁾.

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SUMMARY

The phrase Ἐξ ἐνός in Heb 2,11 is a standard crux. The article attempts to come to grips with it through a close reading of the text of Heb 2,8bc-18. This close reading leads to the conclusion that the “one” mentioned in is the spiritual seed of Abraham composed of all those who, like Abraham exercise faith-trust in God in the face of death. But this spiritual seed of Abraham is modified by the faith-trust of Jesus brought to the perfection of his heavenly priesthood.

⁽²⁵⁾ “And since the crux seems so intractable, any suggested solution will probably have to appear out of the ordinary, idiosyncratic even”.

Slaughter, Fratricide and Sacrilege Cain and Abel Traditions in 1 John 3

In 1 John 3,11-18 Cain symbolizes the antithesis of brotherly love. With his notoriety as the first murderer, Cain represents a compelling illustration of what it means to hate one's brother. The figure of Cain stands in direct contrast to Christ. Cain took another's life; Christ laid down his life for others. At one time NT scholars would comment that the mention of Cain here was the only direct reference to the OT in this document⁽¹⁾. This seemed enigmatic since the Epistle was certainly Jewish in nature. But Judith Lieu has demonstrated that the lack of OT references is not a contradiction of the Epistle's Jewishness. Rather it reflects a tradition of biblical interpretation and application that is found in literature contemporaneous with the Epistle⁽²⁾. When the author of 1 John reached for the story of Cain and Abel it was not only Genesis 4 that was in his mind⁽³⁾. He also had access to a rich set of interpretive traditions that had been attached to the original story.

The author's choice of the Cain illustration seems to presume a degree of familiarity with the story on the part of the readers. The mention of Cain is concise and lacks some significant details. Abel is not mentioned by name and God's seemingly capricious acceptance of his sacrifice is glossed over. The only indication as to why Cain killed his brother is that Abel's works were righteous while Cain's were evil. But even this meager piece of detail is absent from the Genesis 4 story since we are never told what exactly motivated Cain to kill his brother. Yet it was assumed the reader would understand how it was that Cain stood in contrast to Christ. In 1 John 3,2-7 readers are told that they should be pure and righteous just as (καθώς) Christ is pure and righteous. They are also told that in order to be true children of God they must be free from sin and love their brother. This is contrasted with Cain in 3,12 who should not (οὐ καθώς) be a model of behavior. Although Cain is only mentioned briefly in the chapter, Lieu's assessment is certainly correct when she states that: "the presence of Cain extends beyond 1 John 3,12 to cast its shadow over both language and thought of the whole

(¹) C.H. DODD, *The Johannine Epistles* (London 1947) lii; R. BULTMANN, *The Johannine Epistles* (Philadelphia 1973) 54. S. SMALLEY, *1, 2, 3 John* (WBC 51; Waco, TX 1984) 183-184.

(²) J.M. LIEU, 'What was from the Beginning: Scripture and Tradition in the Johannine Epistles', *NTS* (1993) 458-477.

(³) Lieu has outlined a number of Cain and Abel traditions that seem to be in the mind of the author. One interpretative tradition identified Cain as the offspring of the devil. This is probably what stands behind the claim that Cain was "from the evil one" in 3,12 ("What was from the Beginning", 467-472). For other descriptions of Cain and Abel traditions in antiquity see H.-J. KLAUCK, "Brudermord und Bruderliebe. Ethische Paradigmen in 1 Joh 3, 11-17", *Neues Testament und Ethik. Für Rudolf Schnackenburg* (ed. H. MERKLEIN) (Freiburg 1989) 151-169; and J.L. KUGEL, *Traditions of the Bible. A Guide to the Bible As It Was at the Start of the Common Era* (Harvard 1998) 145-169.

chapter”⁽⁴⁾. This paper seeks to demonstrate how the author of 1 John 3 skillfully arranged his argument in a way that resonates with a number of facets of the Cain and Abel traditions. The contrast with Christ incorporates much more of the interpretive traditions associated with the Genesis 4 story and its later development than is sometimes appreciated. The way into this investigation is by examining unusual terminology that echoes some of these traditions.

1. *Cain the Fratricide*

1 John 3,15 states that everyone who hates his brother is an ἀνθρωποκτόνος. This word is usually translated as ‘murderer’ or ‘manslayer’, and is rarely used in classical Greek⁽⁵⁾. Of the two times it appears in Euripides it is used to describe a peculiar type of murder. In the *Cyclops* (ln 127) ἀνθρωποκτόνος describes how humans are eaten by the Cyclopes. In *Iphigenia in Tauris* (ln 386) ἀνθρωποκτόνος is used in the context of human sacrifice. While the scarcity of the term in ancient literature signals the need for caution, the impression is that when it was used ἀνθρωποκτόνος did not refer to murder in general, but to those acts of killing which were considered to be particularly repugnant including, but probably not limited to, the sacrifice and/or devouring of a human victim.

In the NT, ἀνθρωποκτόνος appears only twice, once each in John 8,44 and 1 John 3,15. In the Gospel Jesus uses it to label the devil as one who was a murderer from the beginning. In the Epistle there is no explicit connection between Cain and ἀνθρωποκτόνος but the implications are understood. Cain hated and killed his brother and as the first murderer serves as the chief representative for all brother haters who are labeled an ἀνθρωποκτόνος. It is striking that both times the term is used in the NT there is a connection to the devil. In John 8,44 the devil is the father of the Jews and in 1 John 3,12 Cain is said to be from the evil one. Rather than tackle the more complicated questions surrounding the relationship between the Gospel and the Epistle, it seems more prudent to agree with Lieu and others that the similarities between the two documents are the result of being heirs to the same set of interpretive traditions⁽⁶⁾. The depiction of Cain as the son of the devil was a well established tradition in Jewish and Christian literature and the tradition’s probable influence on the Gospel and 1 John can be acknowledged without rehearsing it in detail here⁽⁷⁾. The use of ἀνθρωποκτόνος by both the Gospel

⁽⁴⁾ LIEU, “What was from the Beginning”, 470. See also D. Muñoz León who suggests that the Cain and Abel story affects the structure of the entire letter and is reflective of the split in the Johannine community (“El derás sobre Caín y Abel en 1 Jn y la situación de la comunidad joánica”, *EstBib* 53 [1995] 213-238).

⁽⁵⁾ R. BROWN, *The Epistles of John* (ABC 30; Garden City, NY 1982) 447.

⁽⁶⁾ LIEU, “What was from the Beginning”, 476-477. R.B. EDWARDS, *The Johannine Epistles* (Sheffield 1996) 55; J. PAINTER, *1, 2, and 3 John* (SP 18; Collegeville, MN 2002) 233.

⁽⁷⁾ J. DOCHHORN, “Mit Kain kam der Tod in die Welt: Zur Auslegung von SapSal 2,24 in 1 Clem 3, 4; 4, 1-7, mit einem Seitenblick auf Polykarp, Phil. 7,1 und Theophilus, Ad Autol. II, 29, 3-4”, *ZNW* 98 (2007) 105-159. KUGEL, *Traditions of the Bible*, 147, 157; LIEU, “What was from the Beginning”, 467-468. N.A. DAHL, “Der Erstgeborene Satans und der Vater des Teufels (Polk. 7 1 und Joh 8 44)”, *Apophoreta*. Festschrift für Ernst Haenchen (Berlin 1964) 70-84.

and the Epistle can also be explained by the common interpretive traditions shared by the two documents⁽⁸⁾.

While both the Gospel and the Epistle use ἀνθρωποκτόνος to describe the referent as a murderer, the applications are somewhat different. In the Gospel the context seems to be the conflict between the Johannine community and the local synagogue. In the Epistle the author is more concerned with the problems of community life. The familial language that permeates 1 John 3 suggests that in spite of the terminology used, the author has a particular type of murder in mind: fratricide. The author presents a contrast between those who are children of God and those who are not and condemns all who hate their brothers. Since the focus is on community life through familial language, it would seem plausible that the Epistle's author used traditions shared with the Gospel to label the brother-haters not simply as murderers but more specifically as fratricides. The examples from Euripides' limited usage of ἀνθρωποκτόνος suggests it was reserved for those types of murder that were viewed as particularly revolting. The killing of a family member could be viewed with the same repugnancy as would the sacrifice and/or devouring of the victim. In the story of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, the heroine is a priestess of Artemis and her job consists of consecrating men to be put to death on the altar. The plot is framed around how she helps her brother, Orestes, to escape this fate. Such a use of ἀνθρωποκτόνος by Euripides is interesting since both here and in 1 John it is the (potential) act of fratricide that is central to the stories. Iphigenia rescued her brother; Cain killed his brother. When combined with the Cain illustration in 1 John 3,15, the ἀνθρωποκτόνος label would have been an effective condemnation of those who refused to follow the example of Christ. Moreover, since they follow the example of Cain and hate their brothers they could be more properly called fratricides⁽⁹⁾.

Such a depiction of Cain is not without precedence. Although Cain is not mentioned by name there are clear echoes between Wisdom 10,3 and 1 John 3,12. In Wisdom an unrighteous man perished because he committed fratricide (ἀδελφοκτόνοις) in a fit of anger. 1 John 3,12 says that Cain committed fratricide because his brother's works were righteous and his were not. Philo refers to Cain as an ἀδελφοκτόνος no less than ten times and sometimes uses the label as a way to talk about Cain without mentioning his name⁽¹⁰⁾. The same labeling of Cain is found in Josephus's *Antiquities* 1.65, a fragment of *Jubilees* 4.15⁽¹¹⁾ and in *1 Clement* 4,7.

⁽⁸⁾ Bultmann suggested that the author's source contained the term ἀνθρωποκτόνος and therefore induced him to make reference to the Cain and Abel story (*The Johannine Epistles*, 54).

⁽⁹⁾ There maybe some connection to Jesus tradition here with anger towards one's brother being connected to murder in Matthew 5,21-24 (A.E. BROOKE, *The Johannine Epistles* [ICC; Edinburgh 1912] 94; SMALLEY, *1, 2, 3 John*, 191; D.C. ALLISON, *Studies in Matthew* [Grand Rapids, MI 2005] 65-78). A similar theme is found later in the Jewish work *Derek Eres Rabba* 11.13 (57b) which attributes to Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, a contemporary of the Johannine authors, the saying, "He who hates his neighbor is among the shedders of blood" (BROWN, *The Epistles of John*, 447).

⁽¹⁰⁾ Worse 96; Posterity, 49; Agriculture, 21; Virtues, 199; Cherubim, 52; Flight, 60; Rewards, 72, 74.

⁽¹¹⁾ A.-M. DENIS, *Concordance grecque des pseudépigraphes d' Ancien Testament* (Louvain-la-Neuve 1987).

What this suggests is that when the author of 1 John used the Cain illustration common consent already identified him as a fratricide (ἀδελφοκτόνος). Although the terminology used in 1 John is somewhat different due to the author's interpretive tradition, the Cain and Abel story was already part of a broader context of traditions⁽¹²⁾. Thus the condemnation of those who do not love their brothers in 1 John 3 could be understood as an act of fratricide at the communal level. This is not to suggest that there was an actual threat of death, but simply that hatred of one's brother was easily equated with Cain's act of fratricide. Although the terminology in 3,15 can be more accurately translated as 'murderer' or 'manslayer', using a label reserved for repugnant acts of killing in the context of the familial language and the Cain and Abel illustration would have made it easy to identify the act as a specific type of murder: fratricide.

2. Purity and Impurity

In 1 John 3,3 readers are told that they will become pure just as Christ is pure. Used here both in its noun and verb form is ἁγνός which is normally translated as "pure" and often used in the context of ritual purity. For instance, in Exodus 19,10-11; Numbers 8,21; 4 Maccabees 5,37; John 11,55 and Acts 21,24, 26 ἁγνός is used in the context of worshippers preparing themselves for an encounter with the deity, entrance into the temple or the maintenance of personal purity. At other times, however, the term's usage reflects the idea of moral purity as in the exhortations to purify one's heart in James 4,8 and in 1 Peter 1,22 where obedience to God brings about the purification of the soul. Commentators, with good reason, usually interpret ἁγνός in 1 John 3,3 as moral rather than ritual purity. They conclude that the thought of Jesus as "without sin" represents the kind of moral purity that the readers of 1 John are supposed to imitate⁽¹³⁾. Others, like Raymond Brown and John Painter, have tried to give more consideration to the aspect of ritual purity by suggesting that the language was part of an early Christian baptismal formula, but this hypothesis cannot be confirmed⁽¹⁴⁾. The fact that the occurrence in 1 John 3,3 is the only instance in the NT when ἁγνός is used to describe Jesus leads to the suggestion that its usage here may refer to more than simply moral purity and includes features of ritual purity. When read in the broader context of the author's contrast between Christ, who sacrificed his own life, and Cain, who killed his brother, it is possible that some degree of ritual purity still stands behind the term's usage.

If we proceed on the assumption that the author portrays the brother-haters not just as murders but more specifically as fratricides, then there is another nuance for the interpretation of this chapter. In antiquity there were instances when the act of murdering a helpless victim, a fellow countrymen or a family member was associated with an act of ὄρεος, usually translated as

⁽¹²⁾ I am not suggesting that the reader of 1 John 3 was aware of all if any of the interpretive traditions that became attached to the Cain and Abel story. But the author was either aware of some of these traditions or at least familiar with a set of terms that were often used to describe Cain's act of treachery against Abel.

⁽¹³⁾ BROOKE, *The Johannine Epistles*, 84; SMALLEY, *1, 2, 3 John*, 149.

⁽¹⁴⁾ BROWN, *The Epistles of John*, 397-398; PAINTER, *1, 2, and 3 John*, 218.

a type of impurity or sacrilege that brought an unforgivable curse upon the perpetrator(s)⁽¹⁵⁾. Sometimes the murderous act was considered ἄγος because it took place in a sacred space. For instance, Herodotus recounts that when the aristocrats of Aegina killed the peasants who revolted against them one of those to be slain escaped and seized the temple gates of Demeter. When they could not free him they cut off his hands and dragged him away with his hands still gripping the temple gates. For this act of sacrilege Herodotus says they received an incurable curse (ἄγος) and eventually were driven out of the city (6.91).

Thucydides records how some Athenians seized the Acropolis with a view to making one of their own the city's ruler. When the people got word of this they laid siege to the Acropolis while the insurgents were still inside. As the siege progressed, those locked inside began to run low on food and water. Under the pretense of safe passage, the besieged were led from the temple and then summarily executed. As in Herodotus' account, those who took refuge at the altar were dragged away and killed. Thucydides says that for this act both the executioners and their descendants were considered to be impure (ἄγος) and driven out of Athens.

Josephus uses the term only once. In *Jewish War* 4.163, he places the ἄγος term in a speech given by the high priest Ananus in which he comments on the actions of the Zealots in the temple. In the speech Ananus laments that he has lived long enough to see the day when the temple would be made impure by the murderers who perform their deeds in the temple precincts.

Not all occurrences of ἄγος were in the context of murder in a sacred space, however. In *Oedipus Tyrannus*, for instance, Creon commands the attendants, as kinsmen, to take Oedipus into the house rather than expose his pollution (ἄγος) to the world (ln 1425). In his account of the aftermath of Julius Caesar's assassination, Appian records that some viewed the murder as a great act of impiety (ἄγος) and that those who participated were liable to the divine curse that accompanies such acts (*Bell. Civ.* 2.15, 124, 127). In the fourth oracle of the Sibyl, Nero's murder of his mother is labeled as ἄγος (*Sib. Or.* 4.121). While these references demonstrate the connection between certain murderous acts and the label of ἄγος, it is Philo of Alexandria that provides the most insight for our purposes.

Of the nineteen times Philo uses ἄγος, seventeen are used in the context of murder and have some type of connection to sacred space, worship of a deity or ritual purity⁽¹⁶⁾. In addition to discussing the need for the high priest not to become impure by coming in contact with the dead or other potential pollutants (*Flight* 113), Philo considers the abortion, exposure or ritual sacrifice of children and any other type of murder, premeditated or not, to be ἄγος (*Confusion*, 161; *Abraham*, 181; *Spec. Laws*, 3.89, 92, 112). Similar to Herodotus and Thucydides, Philo labels the killing of one's fellow countryman as something that renders one impure. Thus the Levites who killed those who worshipped the golden calf as well as Phinehas and the army he led against the Midianites are all said to have become ritually impure

⁽¹⁵⁾ *LSJ*, 8.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Philo also considers transgender peoples who mutilate themselves to be ἄγος. But this is the only usage of the term not connected to murder or sacred ritual (*Spec. Laws* 3.42).

because of their participation in killing fellow Israelites (*Moses*, 1.314; *Drunkenness*, 66-67)⁽¹⁷⁾. This presents a paradox for Philo because the priests are supposed to stay free of pollution (ἄγος), yet they incur this pollution through their act of fratricide in the golden calf incident. And it is his perplexity over the Levites' actions that points to the relationship Philo sees between acts of fratricide and becoming impure. Philo connects ἄγος with fratricide terminology (ἀδελφοκτόνος) when he describes how the Greeks and Persians killed one another to secure their kingdoms (*Spec. Laws*, 3.16, 18) as well as in his portrayal of how the sons of Jacob almost killed their brother Joseph (*Joseph*, 13). Even when fratricide terminology does not actually occur, in those contexts in which it is intended, Philo labels the act as ἄγος. Thus Philo considers the killing of an emperor by another family member as an act that makes one impure (*Embassy*, 30, 66).

More important to the current topic is how Philo portrays Cain. As noted above, Philo gives Cain the epithet of fratricide ten out of the total of fourteen times he uses ἀδελφοκτόνος. In addition, Philo labels Cain as ἄγος five times, four of which are connected to the epithet of fratricide (*Worse*, 96; *Posterity* 49; *Husbandry*, 21; *Virtues*, 199)⁽¹⁸⁾. This means that for Philo the principle example of fratricide was Cain and that Philo interpreted Cain's murderous act as incurring a form of pollution that was most often understood as that which prevents one from being ritually pure. Cain was accursed by God.

When considered in light of how fratricide was viewed in antiquity and how Philo viewed Cain, the distinction between Christ and Cain in 1 John 3 becomes even more pronounced. Although Cain is never said to be ἄγος in 1 John 3 it can be implied by the mention that believers should be pure just as Jesus is pure (ἁγνός). The Cain illustration stands in direct contrast to Christ. Acts of fratricide were seen by both Jews and Gentiles as potentially defiling and Cain's murder of Abel would have contrasted with Christ's own act of self-sacrifice. Readers were exhorted to be pure like Christ rather than brother-haters and fratricides like Cain who was impure.

3. Sacrificial Slaughter

The final section to be examined is the Cain illustration in 3.12. As noted above, there is a lack of detail in the illustration including God's seemingly capricious acceptance of one sacrifice over another which is a major part of the Genesis 4 story. The only reason 1 John gives for Cain's murderous act is that he was from the evil one while his brother was righteous. Both of these descriptions are part of well-established interpretive traditions⁽¹⁹⁾. But once more the choice of terminology may communicate more than is sometimes appreciated. The term used to describe Cain's murderous action is σφάζω,

⁽¹⁷⁾ There is one note of inconsistency in Philo, however. Although he claims at one point that the Levites became impure as a result of their participation in the golden calf incident, he later contradicts himself and says that they did not become impure (*Spec. Laws* 3.127).

⁽¹⁸⁾ The only instance when ἄγος is not paired with ἀδελφοκτόνος to refer to Cain's murderous act is in *QG* 1.77.

⁽¹⁹⁾ See my "Living in the Shadow of Cain: Echoes of a Developing Tradition in James 5:1-6", *NovT* 48.3 (2006) 261-274.

which again is a rarely used term in the NT. Apart from 1 John it only appears in the Apocalypse to describe the slaughtered lamb, the massacre of human beings, the killing of the beast and slain prophets and saints (Rev 5,6; 6,4; 13,3; 18,24)⁽²⁰⁾. Commentators on 1 John 3,12 usually note that the term is intended to indicate a violent murder, perhaps premeditated, and sometimes translate the verse to read: "Cain butchered his brother"⁽²¹⁾. Commentators also note that in the LXX σφάζω is frequently used in the context of both animal and human sacrifice (Gen 22,10; Lev 1,5; Isa 57,5; Ezek 16,21; 23,39). Few if any, however, connect the language of 1 John 3,12 with sacrifice or ritual. Raymond Brown is representative when he says: "In the present passage the verb has no necessary cultic significance; it catches the brutality of one brother's action towards another"⁽²²⁾.

While commentators are correct to interpret Cain's action as a violent murder, it is possible that ritual overtones are also part of the illustration. In classical Greek σφάζω was used to describe the slaughtering of sacrificial animals usually by slitting the animal's throat (e.g. Herodotus, *Hist.* 2.39)⁽²³⁾. It was also applied to the murder of humans particularly when the murder implement was a knife or sword (e.g. Herodotus, *Hist.* 2.39). This understanding of σφάζω was carried over to the LXX where the language of slaughter was used not only in relation to animals but also to describe the ritualistic slaying of false prophets and conquered kings⁽²⁴⁾.

Philo uses σφάζω somewhat sparingly to refer to sacrifice and instances of murder in sacred spaces (*Heir* 20; *Spec. Law* 1.212; 3.91; *Eternity* 20; *Providence* 2.32). Many of the occurrences of σφάζω in Josephus also have some type of connection to ritual and/or sacred space. Bulls are slaughtered for sacrifice (*Ant.* 3.206,226, 237,242,249), Antiochus slaughters those who refuse to apostatize (*War* 1.35), Priests are slaughtered by the Romans in the Temple (*Ant.* 14.66; 17.237,239) and Galileans are slaughtered by Samaritans while traveling to Jerusalem for the Passover (*War* 2.240). While there are instances in Josephus and Philo where σφάζω describes a violent death, it is interesting how often that the term is chosen to describe murder in the context of sacred spaces and/or some type of ritual⁽²⁵⁾.

In his *TDNT* essay, Otto Michel noted that in the context of 1 John 3,12 "σφάζω is a strong term for Cain's fratricide analogous to the ancient use for the murder of brothers or relatives". Michel's English translator added an

⁽²⁰⁾ D.E. AUNE, *Revelation 1-5* (WBC 52a; Dallas, TX 1997) 353.

⁽²¹⁾ BROOKE, *The Johannine Epistles*, 92; B.F. WESTCOTT, *The Epistles of St. John*. The Greek text with notes by the late Brooke Foss Westcott (Abington 1966) 107; SMALLEY, *1, 2, 3 John*, 184.

⁽²²⁾ BROWN, 442.

⁽²³⁾ O. MICHEL, "σφάζω", *TDNT*, VII, 934.

⁽²⁴⁾ The major usage of the term in the LXX is to describe animal sacrifice in Leviticus. There are also a number of occasions when it is used to describe the killing of princes by the conquering king and Elijah's slaughtering the prophets of Baal (3 Kings 18:40; 4 Kings 10:7, 14; 25:7; Jer 52:10). While not in a context of sacrifice, there do seem to be ritual elements involved in the way that entire groups of people are destroyed.

⁽²⁵⁾ For instance, Antiochus makes a sacrifice of those Jews who refuse to defile themselves. Even though the Galileans pilgrims are not murdered in the temple or even in Jerusalem it is interesting that Josephus has used the language of slaughter to describe the death of those who are traveling to celebrate the Passover.

explanatory note stating: "Slaughtering is a metaphorical and very strong expression for fratricide"⁽²⁶⁾. Unfortunately, no evidence is offered that conclusively supports this claim. There are some passages in Philo and Josephus, however, which do seem to point in this direction.

Philo uses σφάζω twice to accuse Caligula of slaughtering his brother. Although specific fratricide terminology is not present it is clear that this is what Philo had in mind (*Embassy* 87, 92). In light of 1 John 3, it is also interesting that Philo contrasts this accusation of fratricide with the brotherly love (φιλαδελφία) of the Dioscuri two brothers who, according to the myth, shared Zeus' gift of immortality with one another⁽²⁷⁾. It is surprising, however, that Philo never uses σφάζω to describe Cain's murderous act, despite the vehement language that he consistently uses to vilify Cain.

Unlike Philo, Josephus does describe Cain's killing of Abel as an act of slaughter (*Ant.* 1.67). Moreover, in *Antiquities* 13.314, Josephus combines the language of fratricide and slaughter to describe Aristobulus' murder of his brother Antigonus. The scene, as described by Josephus, is Aristobulus' death at a time when he had become ill and was losing blood. As a servant was carrying away a bowl of the dying man's blood he slipped and spilled the blood on the very spot where Antigonus had been murdered. This caused a cry to go forth which alerted Aristobulus to the fact that God had noticed what had happened and that he would not escape the consequences for his impious act. Aristobulus died immediately. Interesting here is the possible echoes of the Cain and Abel story. Just as the crying blood attracted God's attention to the slaughtered Abel (Gen 4,10) so too the cry over spilled blood attracted God's attention to the fratricidal slaughter of Antigonus. While neither Philo nor Josephus's use of σφάζω supports the claim that it is a "metaphorical and very strong expression for fratricide", they do understand fratricide as an act of slaughter that could be seen as analogous to Cain's treacherous slaying of Abel.

But we need not restrict ourselves to a lexical study to corroborate the suggestion that some ancient interpreters viewed Cain's killing of Abel as a form of sacrifice. An examination of the traditions demonstrates that this was not an unusual way to interpret Cain's murder of Abel. For instance, *Genesis Rabbah* provides three different possible scenarios for how Cain killed Abel.

With what did he kill him? R. Simeon said: He killed him with a staff: *And a young man for my bruising* (Gen 4:23) implies a weapon which inflicts a bruise. The Rabbis said: He killed him with a stone: *For I have slain a man for wounding me (ib.)* indicates a weapon which inflict wounds. R. Azariah and R. Jonathon in R. Isaac's name said: Cain had closely observed where his father slew the bullock [which he sacrificed, as it is written], *And it shall please the Lord better than a bullock* (Ps 69,32), and there he killed him: by the throat and its organs (*Genesis Rabbah* 22,8).

⁽²⁶⁾ MICHEL, "σφάζω", *TDNT*, VII, 934.

⁽²⁷⁾ Pollux was granted immortality by Zeus, but he persuaded Zeus to allow him to share the gift with his brother Castor. As a result, the two spend alternate days on Olympus (as gods) and in Hades (as deceased mortals).

It is the third option that is of particular interest here. The comparison of the way that Cain killed Abel with how one would kill a bullock suggests a highly developed interpretation of the murder. The description to be sure is chosen in such a way as to include Abel's blood which would have spilled from the cut throat⁽²⁸⁾. Such a description concurs with σφάζω's use in ritual contexts and suggests a sacrificial interpretation of Abel's murder.

A similar interpretation is found in the Genesis commentary of Ephrem the Syrian who also associated the murder of Abel with Cain's rejected offering.

But instead of doing well so that the offering that had been rejected might be credited to Cain as acceptable, he then made an offering of murder to that One to whom he had already made an offering of negligence (*Commentary on Genesis* 3.4.3).

Although Ephrem does not provide the throat-slitting details found in *Genesis Rabbah*, it is clear that he recognized Cain's murder of Abel as a continuation of offering improper sacrifices to God⁽²⁹⁾.

Considering the way σφάζω was used in antiquity and the tradition that Cain's murder of Abel resembled an act of sacrifice, it appears there is more to the description of 1 John 3,12 than just a violent death. The ritual context normally associated with the term could easily be read as an echo of Genesis 4 and God's seemingly capricious acceptance of one offering over that of another. Those readers familiar with the Cain and Abel story could associate the sacrificial terminology of 1 John 3,12 with the rejection of Cain's sacrifice and subsequent murder of Abel. The fact that the term was sometimes used to describe acts of fratricide and that Cain was often labeled as the fratricide would have made it easier for readers to understand Cain's murder of Abel as a form of ritual slaying. When read in the broader context of 1 John 3 the idea of Cain not merely killing Abel but doing so in a way that resembles an act of sacrifice would have stood in stark contrast to the figure of Christ. In 3,16 Christ is the ultimate example of brotherly love. Unlike Cain, Christ gave his own life rather than taking the life of another. The ultimate example of the brother-haters was Cain who did not offer up his own life but instead offered an unacceptable sacrifice to God: his brother Abel.

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The literary context and the interpretive traditions associated with the Cain and Abel story coupled with the perception of fratricide in the ancient world suggest that there is more to the Cain illustration in 1 John 3,12 than has hitherto been appreciated. The mention of Cain is not merely a brief nod

⁽²⁸⁾ A similar tradition of Cain killing Abel like an animal is found in the Babylonian Talmud: "Cain inflicted upon his brothers many blows and wounds, because he knew not whence the soul departs, until he reached the neck" (*Sanhedrin* 37b).

⁽²⁹⁾ I am not suggesting, of course, that either *Genesis Rabbah* or Ephrem's commentary were used by the author of 1 John. But both of these documents do reflect a common interpretive trajectory that held Cain's murder of Abel as a form of sacrifice and 1 John may simply be an early witness to such an interpretation.

to an old story of murder. The shadow of Cain casts itself over the entire chapter. Cain is the focal point of the antithesis being made between Christ and the brother-haters. Those who love their brothers will be pure like Christ and thus will sacrifice themselves for others as Christ did. The connection of purity language in the context of a discussion of Christ's sacrifice would have directed readers to consider the contrasting type of sacrifice Cain offered which was not of himself but his brother Abel. Cain was the ultimate example of fratricide because he hated his brother. Consequently, all those who followed Cain's example rather than Christ's were guilty of murder. Although they may not have physically killed their brothers, their hatred had theological implications that caused them to be viewed as offering an impure sacrifice and earned them, therefore, the title of fratricide.

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SUMMARY

Cain symbolizes the antithesis of brotherly love and stands in direct contrast to Christ. The choice of terminology used to describe the slaughter of Abel in 1 John 3,11-18 retains the ritual overtones that pervade the original story in Genesis 4. This terminology was often used to describe murders linked to a ritual act as well as fratricide. The ritual overtones in the passage emphasize the contrast with Christ. By linking those who "hate their brothers" with Cain, the author of 1 John accused them of an act that stood in contrast to the self-sacrificial act of Christ. Hatred of others meant they were guilty of communal fratricide, which is a sacrilege.

Alcune osservazioni sulla conclusione del Salmo 89 (vv. 47-53)

Gli ultimi versetti del Sal 89 danno l'impressione di essere piuttosto disomogenei, diversi dal resto del salmo. Ciò vale senz'altro per il v. 53, quasi universalmente ritenuto come redazionale, aggiunto per segnalare la fine del terzo libro del salterio, ma anche per i vv. 47-52, che vengono messi in discussione, a causa del loro tenore prosaico, da autorevoli esegeti⁽¹⁾. Altri esegeti, più numerosi, ritengono redazionali i vv. 48-49, che sarebbero stati aggiunti per collegare il Sal 89 con i vicini salmi 88 e 90 e, più in là, con il Sal 49⁽²⁾.

Contro queste diffuse opinioni, è nostra convinzione che né il v. 53, né i vv. 47-52, né i vv. 48-49 possono essere tolti dall'insieme del Sal 89: cioè, che essi fanno parte integrante del salmo. Vogliamo dimostrarlo per gradi.

1. La supplica dei vv. 47-52

Indubbiamente i vv. 47-52 staccano dai vv. 20-46 per più motivi. Anzitutto per il metro, che qui è prevalentemente di 4 + 4 accenti, mentre nei vv. 20-46 gli accenti sono 3 + 3⁽³⁾. Poi, per il fatto che in essi è presente il tetragramma sacro יהוה (vv. 47 e 52: inclusione), che è assente dai vv. 20-46. Questi due fatti collegano i vv. 47-52 con i vv. 2-3.6-19, cioè con la parte innica del salmo (il tetragramma appare qui nei vv. 2.6.7 [2x].9 [2x].16.19)⁽⁴⁾.

D'altra parte, dal punto di vista del genere letterario, i vv. 47-52 sono la logica continuazione dei vv. 39-46. Nelle lamentazioni collettive, all'esposizione della situazione di miseria segue naturalmente la richiesta dell'intervento divino: il lamento (vv. 39-46) sfocia logicamente nella supplica (47-

⁽¹⁾ Cfr. T. VEIJOLA, *Verheissung in der Krise*. Studien zur Literatur und Theologie der Exilszeit anhand des 89. Psalms (AASF B 220; Helsinki 1982) 37, il quale a sua volta si rifà a C.A. BRIGGS – E.G. BRIGGS, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms* (ICC; Edinburgh 1906) II, 250, 264-265, e a E. PODECHARD, *Le psautier* (Lyon 1949-1954) II, 111.

⁽²⁾ Cfr. F.-L. HOSSFELD – E. ZENGER, *Psalmen 51–100* (HThKAT; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 2000) 583, che citano in questo senso M.E. TATE, *Psalms 51–100* (WBC 20; Dallas 1990) 427; M. EMMENDÖRFFER, *Der ferne Gott*. Eine Untersuchung der alttestamentlichen Volksklagelieder vor dem Hintergrund der mesopotamischen Literatur (FAT 21; Tübingen 1998) 237; C. RÖSEL, *Die messianische Redaktion des Psalters*. Studien zur Entstehung und Theologie der Sammlung Ps 2–89* (CThM.BW 19; Stuttgart 1999) 142-143.

⁽³⁾ Cfr. VEIJOLA, *Verheissung*, 34-35.

⁽⁴⁾ L'assenza del tetragramma nei vv. 4-5.20-38 è comprensibile per il fatto che qui JHWH parla in prima persona. Essa appare strana invece nei vv. 39-46, cioè appunto nel "lamento", in cui pesanti accuse vengono rivolte a Lui. Si ha l'impressione che l'uso del tetragramma divino esclusivamente nell'inno (vv. 2-3.6-19: 7x + 1 [1x]), nella preghiera (vv. 47-52: 2x) e nella benedizione finale (1x) non sia casuale. Il numero di 10 apparizioni (con l'esclusione di יהוה al v. 9) è significativo. Inoltre è possibile che la presenza del tetragramma voglia sottolineare l'aspetto della "misericordia" divina, come suggerisce la tradizione rabbinica (cfr. M. MILLARD, "Zum Problem des elohistischen Psalters. Überlegungen zum Gebrauch von יהוה und אלהים im Psalter", *Der Psalter in Judentum und Christentum* [FS N. Lohfink] [ed. E. ZENGER] [HBS 18; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1998] 97-98).

52)⁽⁵⁾. Dal punto di vista della ripetizione dei lessemi, un fenomeno vistoso nel Sal 89⁽⁶⁾, notiamo l'inclusione mediante i termini משיח (vv. 39 e 52), עבדיך/עבדך (vv. 40 e 51), חרף (vv. 42 e 51.52) e ארוב (vv. 43 e 52).

Allargando la nostra considerazione ai versetti precedenti, appare chiaro che anche le due parti iniziali del salmo, l'inno (vv. 2-3.6-19) e l'oracolo (vv. 4-5.20-38) sono collegate non solo con il lamento (vv. 39-46), ma anche, specificamente, con la preghiera dei vv. 47-52. Le ripetizioni di lessemi significativi saranno notate, volta a volta, nell'esposizione che segue. Dal punto di vista del genere letterario, l'inno e l'oracolo acquistano il loro significato alla luce del lamento: ciò è espresso significativamente dal ואתח, iniziale del v. 39. Con questo forte "ma tu" viene questionato tutto ciò che era stato detto nei vv. 2-38. E, a sua volta, il questionamento non è fine a se stesso, ma sfocia nella domanda del v. 47: "Fino a quando?", in cui traspare la speranza di un futuro migliore⁽⁷⁾.

Contro l'ipotesi di un'aggiunta redazionale dei vv. 48-49, sta il fatto della struttura unitaria dei vv. 47-52. Il brano è composto di due parti costruite in maniera analoga: a una domanda iniziale (עד מה, v. 47; איה, v. 50), segue ogni volta un versetto introdotto dall'imperativo del verbo זכר (vv. 48 e 51). L'annotazione סלה, alla fine del v. 49, marca la divisione della preghiera nelle due strofe 47-49 e 50-52.

2. Fino a quando (vv. 47-49)?

La prima strofa della conclusione è caratterizzata da quattro domande rivolte direttamente a Dio. Il questionamento di Dio è caratteristico delle lamentazioni. Per la domanda iniziale si veda, accanto al nostro salmo, il vicino Sal 88,15, ma soprattutto 79,5.

תבער כמו אש חמחך:	עד מה ידודה חסחר לנצח	Sal 89,47
תבער כמו אש קנאותך:	עד מה ידודה תאנף לנצח	Sal 79,5

Un parallelismo così puntuale fa pensare che l'autore stabilisca volutamente dei legami tra i salmi del III libro. Il Sal 79 è una lamentazione collettiva sulla distruzione di Gerusalemme e in particolare del tempio: il parallelo suggerisce una complementarietà tra la fine del tempio e quella della monarchia⁽⁸⁾.

⁽⁵⁾ Cfr. H. GUNKEL, *Einleitung in die Psalmen* (Göttingen 1985) 125; G.W. AHLSTRÖM, *Psalm 89: Eine Liturgie aus dem Ritual des leidenden Königs* (Lund 1959) 155.

⁽⁶⁾ Cfr. le tabelle (largamente incomplete, ma tuttavia suggestive) di N.M. SARNA, "Psalm 89: A study in inner biblical exegesis", *Biblical and Other Studies* (ed. A. ALTMANN) (Cambridge, MA 1963) 31, 32; J.W. WARD, "The literary form and liturgical background of Psalm 89", *VT* 11 (1961) 339; VEUOLA, *Verheissung*, 39. Come osserva Ward (324), si tratta di termini altamente significativi, che toccano la sostanza stessa del salmo.

⁽⁷⁾ Cfr. P. AUFFRET, "Tu as juré à David sur ta vérité. Étude structurelle du psaume 89", *Merveilles à nos yeux. Étude structurelle de vingt psaumes dont celui de 1 Ch 16,8-36* (BZAW 235; Berlin - New York 1995) 54.

⁽⁸⁾ Si veda R.L. COLE, *The Shape and Message of Book III (Psalms 73-89)* (JSOTSS 307; Sheffield 2000) 189. Questo parallelismo tra il destino della nazione (Sal 74; 79) e quello del re (Sal 89) parla contro l'identificazione del "re" del Sal 89 con il popolo, suggerita da diversi autori (cfr. sotto, nota 31). Si tratta, secondo l'intenzione del redattore del III libro, di due grandezze complementari: non della stessa grandezza, altrimenti non esisterebbe complementarietà.

E tuttavia la domanda si collega strettamente anche con il contesto del Sal 89. Venendo dopo il lamento, essa fa intravedere una speranza. Chi fa la domanda: “fino a quando?”, suppone che ci sia un termine alla condizione presente di rigetto descritta nei vv. 39-46, che cioè prima o poi la promessa fatta a Davide, che i vv. 4-5.20-38 descrivevano come durevole, si compia⁽⁹⁾. Già i vv. 34-38 avevano ribadito che, nonostante i peccati della discendenza, l'alleanza con Davide non sarebbe stata revocata. Se ora perciò i fatti sembrano smentire quella promessa, se l'alleanza sembra finita (vv. 39-40), ciò è soltanto apparenza. Mentre nei vv. 20-38 a parlare era direttamente Dio (era lui che assicurava la durata eterna dell'alleanza davidica, cfr. v. 20), la revoca dell'alleanza nei vv. 39-46 è messa in bocca al salmista. Con ciò si suggerisce la possibilità che quest'analisi della situazione non corrisponda a verità⁽¹⁰⁾. Quello che sembra “rigetto”, in realtà è soltanto “correzione”, nel senso del v. 33. Se l'accusa dei vv. 39-46 fosse vera, Dio sarebbe bugiardo e fedifrago, non sarebbe più Dio.

I vv. 48-49, dicevamo, sono visti spesso come un'aggiunta, mirante a collegare il Sal 89 con i due salmi vicini, 88 e 90⁽¹¹⁾. Il legame è indubbio: il richiamo alla condizione umana non è tipico della lamentazione collettiva, ma dei salmi sapienziali (חָכָם, Sal 89,48, cfr. 39,6; 49,2; בְּנֵי אָדָם, Sal 89,48, cfr. 90,3), ma ciò non toglie la pertinenza dei due versetti alla domanda del v. 47. L'autore ricorda a Dio che la sua vita è breve e che perciò bisogna che si affretti a deporre la sua ira, se vuole che il suo servo veda l'attuarsi della promessa. La brevità della vita è ricordata come un appello a desistere dall'ira⁽¹²⁾.

D'altra parte, l'uso del verbo בָּרָא al v. 48b lancia un ponte verso il v. 13, dove si esaltava il potere del creatore (“Il Nord e il Sud tu li hai creati, בָּרָאתָ”). Accostando a tale verbo il termine שָׂא, l'autore questiona amaramente questo potere: vale la pena creare per poi lasciar vivere in una maniera così effimera? Il richiamo alla creazione viene confermato al seguente v. 49, dove i due termini גִּבּוֹר וְיָד echeggiano il v. 14: “A te appartiene un braccio con potenza (גִּבּוֹרָה), forte è la tua mano (יָד), levata è la tua destra”. Ora invece la “mano” potente è quella dello Sheol, a cui nessun uomo può sfuggire (v. 49). Tutte queste affermazioni sono redatte come domanda, vengono così

(⁹) Secondo Heim, le due domande del v. 47 sono retoriche, implicando una risposta negativa: Dio non nasconderà per sempre il suo volto, la sua ira non arderà come il fuoco, fino alla completa distruzione del suo oggetto (K.M. HEIM, “The [God]-forsaken king of Psalm 89: A historical and intertextual enquiry”, *King and Messiah in Israel and in Ancient Near East*. Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminary [ed. J. DAY] [JSOTSS 270; Sheffield 1998] 305).

(¹⁰) Cfr. M. SAUR, *Die Königspsalmen*. Studien zur Entstehung und Theologie (BZAW 340; Berlin – New York 2004) 175.

(¹¹) Così, ad esempio, HOSSELD – ZENGER, *Psalmen 51–100*, 597. Sul legame del Sal 89 con i salmi 88 e 90 (che non si restringe ai vv. 48-49), si veda COLE, *The Shape*, 201-218, 219-222. I lessemi che uniscono i salmi 88 e 89 sono 33, tra cui i seguenti binomi: בְּשִׁכְלִי לִ...הָאֲדָרִי (88,1 e 89,1); בְּכֵל יָדָם (88,10.18 e 89,17, cfr. 30.46); חָסֵד + אֲמוּנָה (88,12 e 89,2.3.25.29.34.50, cfr. 6.9.15.20.38.53). Altrettanto numerosi sono i lessemi che uniscono il Sal 89 con il 90: noi ne abbiamo contati 29, tra cui i due binomi דָּוִד יָדִיד (90,1 e 89,2.5) e כָּל + יָדָם (90,9.14, cfr. 4.10.12.15 e 89,17, cfr. 30.46). I tre salmi 88, 89 e 90 hanno in comune tra loro 12 lessemi significativi.

(¹²) In questo senso si veda Sal 88,11-13; 2 Sam 14,14; Gb 14,1-6; Sal 39,14.

allineate al “fino a quando” iniziale del v. 47. Esse esprimono una forte critica, ma allo stesso tempo la speranza di un intervento divino, segnalata dal verbo “ricordare”, זכר (v. 48). Il “ricordo” divino cambia il corso degli eventi (cfr. Gen 8,1; Es 2,24). Allora, ciò che sembra impossibile agli uomini non è impossibile alla “mano” del “creatore”. Cioè: non solo le domande dei vv. 47-49 questionano l’inno dei vv. 6-19, ma anche l’inno è una risposta anticipata a queste domande⁽¹³⁾.

Il pronome di prima persona al v. 48 sorprende. Noi leggiamo il difficile passo come una frase sospesa: “Ricorda: io...che cos’è la (mia) vita?”⁽¹⁴⁾. Dal momento che finora l’argomento del salmo era il re, diversi autori hanno identificato il pronome di prima persona con il messia⁽¹⁵⁾: sarebbe lui a prendere la parola. Qui si impone a mio avviso una considerazione contestuale. Anzitutto, l’“io” risponda come soggetto al v. 51b, e là il contesto fa pensare che esso si riferisca non al messia, ma agli עבדיך di 51a. Si tratta dunque del salmista⁽¹⁶⁾, che dichiara la sua appartenenza al gruppo degli עבדים. Il passaggio dal singolare al plurale nelle lamentazioni non è infrequente (cfr. Is 63,7-64,1; Sal 102), e trova corrispondenza nella prima parte del Sal 89, dove l’“io” iniziale dei vv. 2-3 diviene “noi” ai vv. 18-19, un “noi” che si distingue dal “re” (cfr. v. 19: מלכנו). Le tre grandezze, il salmista, il gruppo dei “servi” e il “re”, sono distinte tra loro, anche se sono strettamente collegate. In tal senso si può vedere rispecchiata nella brevità della vita del salmista (v. 48) quella della vita del re, a cui furono accorciati i giorni della giovinezza (v. 46a).

Questa interpretazione trova conferma nell’“io” enfatico che appare in Sal 88,14.16. Il salmista del Sal 89 diviene così il rappresentante non solo di Israele, ma semplicemente dell’uomo, ricapitolando in sé la precarietà della condizione umana, come essa viene messa drammaticamente in luce nei Salmi 88 e 90.

3. Io porto nel mio seno tutti i molti popoli (vv. 50-52)

La seconda strofa della supplica è strutturata, dal punto di vista dell’argomento, in forma centrale. Nei versetti periferici l’argomento è “Davide” (parole chiave דוד, v. 50, e משיחך, v. 52), nel versetto centrale l’argomento è “Israele” nelle due forme, quella plurale (עבדיך, v. 51a) e quella singolare del salmista (v. 51b).

⁽¹³⁾ Secondo Cole, l’“inno” di Sal 89,6-19 sarebbe stato collocato a questo punto del salterio per rispondere con la lode e la fiducia alle quattro “disperate” domande di Sal 88,11-13 (COLE, *The Shape*, 201-203). A mio avviso però Cole va troppo in là quando identifica il soggetto del Sal 88 con il re del Sal 89 (204), e quando vede in Sal 89,2-5 un’affermazione della resurrezione del re davidico (212).

⁽¹⁴⁾ TM, che unisce con un maqqep אִי al verbo זָכַר, è impossibile: אִי non può essere oggetto del verbo. Di qui le varie proposte di emendazione, la più comune delle quali è di sostituire אִי con אִנִּי, o di cambiare il sostantivo חַיִּי, “durata della vita”, con l’aggettivo חַלֵּל, “effimero” (cfr. BHS). Con H.U. STEYMANS, *Psalm 89 und der Davidbund*. Eine strukturelle und redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung (ÖBS 27; Frankfurt 2005) 50, noi intendiamo אִי in senso prolettico, come una specie di *casus pendens*, a cui riferire in particolare la considerazione sulla durata della vita.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Cfr. ad esempio H. GUNKEL, *Die Psalmen* (Göttingen 1986) 395; AHLSTRÖM, *Psalm 89*, 155; H.-J. KRAUS, *Psalmen* (BK 15; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1978) 784.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Secondo Steymans a parlare sarebbe l’autore implicito del salmo, Etan (STEYMANS, *Psalm 89 und der Davidbund*, 181).

v. 50	A. Il messia	דוד
v. 51	B. Il popolo	עבדך, שאחי
v. 52	A'. Il messia	משיחך

Come richiami lessematici possiamo considerare i termini אדני, "mio Signore" (vv. 50.51) e חרף (vv. 51 e 52 [2x]). Abbiamo dunque una concatenazione, per cui il primo verso è unito al secondo, e il secondo al terzo.

Com'è da attendersi, alla fine del salmo si raccolgono in sintesi i diversi motivi che avevano caratterizzato le varie parti del discorso. Il v. 50, subito all'inizio, ha il valore di un riassunto di ciò che fin qui era stato detto. Esso è redatto come domanda, collegandosi in questo alle quattro domande dei vv. 47-49. Il termine חסדיך riprende le prime due parole del salmo, חסדי יהוה (v. 2a, cfr. ancora 3.15.25.29.34). Queste "misericordie" erano state oggetto di un solenne "giuramento" (נשבעתי, vv. 4.36), fatto a "Davide" (דוד, vv. 4.36), e fondato sulla "fedeltà" divina (אמתך, v. 2b, cfr. ancora 3.6.9.15.25.29.34.38). Delle misericordie si dice, però, che erano ראשונים, "quelle di prima". Con questo aggettivo il salmista fa riferimento alle prime due parti del salmo, fino al v. 38, riprendendo il ואתה del v. 39. C'è una tensione tra ciò che era "prima" e ciò che è "adesso", e che è stato descritto nei vv. 39-46. Dov'è andata a finire la misericordia di Dio? Di nuovo, la domanda è piena di rimprovero, ma, pur nell'asprezza del rimprovero, essa è animata dalla speranza che la misericordia di Dio non sia finita.

Ciò viene espresso dalla rinnovata richiesta di "ricordarsi" (זכר, v. 51). Oggetto del ricordo divino è la "vergogna dei tuoi servi" (חרפת עבדך). Abbiamo resistito alla tentazione di correggere il plurale di TM con il singolare "del tuo servo", che si riferirebbe al messia, e sarebbe più logico⁽¹⁷⁾. Leggendo il plurale⁽¹⁸⁾, è impossibile riferire questo termine al messia. Esso richiama l'altro plurale "strano", חסידך, "i tuoi fedeli", del v. 20. I due termini sono ricorrenti nel salterio per indicare la comunità di riferimento del salmista, e si identificano, almeno in parte, con l'altro termine עם, "popolo", apparso ai vv. 16 e 20⁽¹⁹⁾. Questo filone collettivo del salmo trova, dunque, espressione nel termine עבדך, un termine che unisce la finale del Sal 89 con il successivo Sal 90, in cui il termine appare due volte, ai vv. 13 e 16.

Dicevamo dell'impossibilità di identificare gli עבדך con il messia. Però è sintomatico il fatto che il messia venga chiamato con lo stesso termine (עבדך, v. 40, inclusione, cfr. vv. 4.21). Il termine חרפה, che forma quasi un Leitmotiv di questa parte della conclusione, aparendo altre due volte in forma verbale al v. 52, riprende il v. 42, dove si riferiva al messia, però con caratteri collettivi. Là infatti i "vicini", più che saccheggiare e deridere il re,

⁽¹⁷⁾ Leggono al singolare, tra gli altri, AHLSTRÖM, *Psalm 89*, 156; R.J. TOURNAY, "Note sur le Psaume 89,51-52", *RB* 83 (1976) 387; KRAUS, *Psalmen*, 781; G. RAVASI, *Il libro dei Salmi* (Bologna 1984) II, 824; SAUR, *Die Königpsalmen*, 155.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Per il plurale si schiera decisamente VEIJOLA, *Verheissung*, 113-118. Cfr. anche TATE, *Psalms 51-100*, 412; STEYMANS, *Psalm 89 und der Davidbund*, 52.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Nella lamentazione collettiva del Sal 79 i tre vocaboli, "servi", "fedeli" e "popolo" vengono usati in maniera sinonimica per indicare il popolo di Israele: עבדך, vv. 2.10; חסידך, v. 2; עמך, v. 13. Cfr. VEIJOLA, *Verheissung*, 115.

saccheggiavano la città di Gerusalemme e il popolo⁽²⁰⁾. La vergogna del popolo era vergogna del re. Ora si dà il fenomeno reciproco, per cui la vergogna del re è vergogna del popolo: si spiega così il fatto che al v. 51 si parli del popolo, mentre al v. 52 si parla del re.

Enigmatico è il v. 51b, dove improvvisamente il plurale diviene singolare, riprendendo l'“io” del v. 48 (e dei vv. 2-3). Chi parla non può che essere un membro del gruppo degli עבדיך, e abbiamo riconosciuto la voce del salmista. Generalmente si intende la frase nel senso di “soportare (lo scherno) di tutti i molti popoli”, seguendo G οὐ ὑπέσχον ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ μου πολλῶν ἐθνῶν (cfr. Vg *quod continui in sinu meo multarum gentium*)⁽²¹⁾.

Ma, secondo TM, oggetto di “portare nel seno” non è “la vergogna”, bensì “tutti i molti popoli”, e in questo senso la frase ha un significato altamente positivo, richiamando Nm 11,12⁽²²⁾, dove Mosè protesta: “L'ho forse concepito io tutto questo popolo (אִם כָּל הָעָם הַזֶּה)? O l'ho forse dato alla luce io, perché tu mi dica: ‘Pòrtatelo in grembo (שָׂאוּ בְחִיקְךָ), come la balia porta il bambino lattante?’”. La frase esprime dunque la responsabilità amorevole di qualcuno per le persone che gli sono affidate. L'espressione ritorna nel Deuterioisaia, un libro che ha numerose affinità con il Sal 89⁽²³⁾. In Is 40,11 soggetto del verbo è Dio: di lui si dice che “porta gli agnellini sul suo seno” (טָלְאִים וּבְחִיקִי שָׂא). In 46,3,4 in luogo degli agnellini è la “casa di Giacobbe” ad essere amorevolmente “portata” da Dio. Ma in 53,4 e 12 è “il mio servo” (עַבְדִּי, 52,13) che “porta” su di sé le malattie e i peccati dei “molti” (חַטָּא רַבִּים נְשָׂא, v. 12), dove il termine “servo” richiama da vicino gli עבדיך di Sal 89,51a⁽²⁴⁾, e i רַבִּים sono “i popoli del mondo”⁽²⁵⁾.

Alcuni autori si avvedono di questo senso positivo di TM, ma lo trovano estraneo al contesto. Perciò propongono di emendare עָמִים, “(porto nel mio petto) tutte le contese dei popoli”⁽²⁶⁾. Effettivamente il pensiero di una responsabilità di Israele per i popoli finora non era apparso nel Sal 89: in esso non si parla affatto dei “popoli”, a meno di non identificarli con i “nemici” (vv. 23.43.52). Di un rapporto positivo di Israele con i “popoli” parla

⁽²⁰⁾ Effettivamente i paralleli si riferiscono a grandezze collettive. Si veda, per il saccheggio (שָׁבַח/שָׁבַח), 2Re 17,20; Sal 44,11; Is 42,22.24; per la derisione (חִרְפָּה), Sal 44,14; 79,4.12 (cfr. anche, quanto al senso, Sal 80,7.13; Lam 2,15).

⁽²¹⁾ Per la critica testuale del v. 51b rinviamo a D. BARTHÉLEMY et al., *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament* (OBO 50/4; Fribourg – Göttingen 2005) IV, 633-635 (che lascia aperto il significato dell'espressione, in senso negativo o positivo); TOURNAY, “Note”, 381-384 (che intende in senso negativo). Per ciò che riguarda G, il genitivo πολλῶν ἐθνῶν è un genitivo soggettivo, che Tournay rende così: “(l'outrage) provenant de nombreux peuples” (381).

⁽²²⁾ Cfr. TOURNAY, “Note”, 386-387; VEIOLA, *Verheissung*, 90, nota 16. L'espressione “portare nel seno” è usata nell'epilogo del codice di Hammurabi (Rev. 24, il. 46-52: “In my bosom I carried the peoples of the land of Sumer and Akkad”, ANET 178).

⁽²³⁾ Sul legame del Deuterioisaia con il Sal 89 cfr. VEIOLA, *Verheissung*, 58-59, 86-88.

⁽²⁴⁾ Sul rapporto tra gli עבדים del salterio e quelli di Is 40-66 cfr. U. BERGES, “Die Knechte im Psalter. Ein Beitrag zu seiner Kompositionsgeschichte”, *Bib* 81 (2000) 153-178.

⁽²⁵⁾ Cfr. RINGGREN, “רב”, *TWAT* VII, 315.

⁽²⁶⁾ Citiamo per tutti GUNKEL, *Die Psalmen*, 396. Similmente TOURNAY, “Note”. Tra i pochi ad intendere la frase in senso positivo è SAUR, *Die Königspsalmen*, 177, che però la riferisce al Messia, leggendo il singolare עַבְדִּי in Sal 89,51.

invece il Sal 87, un salmo di Core strutturalmente vicino al nostro. Come abbiamo visto per i versetti precedenti, il salmista traccia volutamente legami con i salmi vicini. Sal 87,6 suona: “JHWH conterà, scrivendo i popoli (עַמִּים): Là costui è nato”. Questa funzione universale del popolo di Dio (= Sion) a riguardo dei popoli si riflette in Sal 89,51b e viene fatta propria dal salmista, che assume così il carattere di rappresentante del popolo⁽²⁷⁾.

Come era il caso per i vv. 48-49, anche ora il richiamo al Sal 87 non basta per far ritenere il v. 51b un’aggiunta redazionale. È vero che qui mancano legami lessicali precisi con il resto del salmo, ma il pensiero è coerente con esso: la responsabilità che Israele ha rispetto a tutti i popoli della terra è ricordata per chiedere a Dio di togliere il disonore (חִרְפָּה) che caratterizza il suo stato presente. Il riferimento è ai vv. 16-19, in cui si delineava la beatitudine del “popolo che conosce l’acclamazione”, del quale si diceva che “cammineranno nella luce del tuo volto” (v. 16). Al popolo di Dio si addice la beatitudine, non la vergogna. Ricordiamo che il v. 51 non si riferisce al messia, ma al salmista e al popolo.

Del “messia” parla invece il v. 52. Contrariamente a un’opinione diffusa⁽²⁸⁾, אִשָּׁר non è una particella relativa che si riferisce ai “popoli”, perché il soggetto del verbo חָרַף è un altro, cioè “i tuoi nemici”, quindi noi lo intendiamo come una congiunzione, esplicativa del verbo “ricordare”⁽²⁹⁾. Oggetto della vergogna è chiaramente il messia. E dunque, la vergogna dei servi (v. 51) ha per causa la vergogna del messia (v. 52). Si tratta di due affermazioni distinte, ma si coglie lo stretto rapporto che unisce le due grandezze. Il messia è figura rappresentativa di questo popolo di servi, per cui l’offesa fatta a lui ricade sul suo popolo⁽³⁰⁾. L’ultima parola del brano non può non riguardare il messia, perché era lui l’oggetto dell’oracolo divino ai vv. 20-38.

Una comprensione collettiva della figura del messia, per cui costui sarebbe semplicemente cifra del popolo, non corrisponde al tenore del testo⁽³¹⁾. L’autore postesilico vuol riflettere non in generale sulla situazione del popolo, ma in particolare su quella della monarchia: questo è il tema del Sal 89⁽³²⁾. L’autore pensa dunque a una restaurazione della monarchia davidica⁽³³⁾. In che senso, è difficile dire: è la questione del messianismo

⁽²⁷⁾ Curiosamente, Steymans pensa a una lezione di catechismo impartita dal saggio Etan ai popoli, rappresentati come bambini che egli porterebbe al seno (STEYMAN, *Psalm 89 und der Davidbund*, 189).

⁽²⁸⁾ Cfr. F. DELITZSCH, *Die Psalmen* (Gießen – Basel 1984) 583.

⁽²⁹⁾ Alternativamente, si potrebbe intendere come particella relativa riferita al termine חִרְפָּה, con significato di oggetto interno (“[la vergogna] con cui hanno svergognato”), ma la cosa mi sembra meno probabile.

⁽³⁰⁾ Lo stesso fenomeno era apparso, in forma inversa, ai vv. 16-19. Là la gloria del popolo (vv. 16-17) era legata al fatto che il loro re e scudo apparteneva a Dio (v. 19).

⁽³¹⁾ Per una comprensione collettiva del “messia” nel Sal 89 si pronunciano, tra gli altri, J. BECKER, “Die kollektive Deutung der Königpsalmen”, *ThPh* 52 (1977) 574; VEIJOLA, *Verheissung*, 173-175; EMMENDÖFFER, *Der ferne Gott*, 239; E. S. GERSTENBERGER, *Psalms, Part 2, and Lamentations* (FOTL XV; Grand Rapids 2001) 153; M. MARTILA, *Collective Reinterpretation in the Psalms. A Study on the Redaction History of the Psalter* (FAT.NF 13; Tübingen 2006) 143; BERGES, “Die Knechte”, 164.

⁽³²⁾ Cfr. in questo senso SAUR, *Die Königpsalmen*, 180. Per un’interpretazione personale del “messia” ai vv. 39 e 52 si pronuncia anche B. RENAUD, “La cohérence littéraire et théologique du Psaume 89”, *RevSR* 69 (1995) 434-435.

⁽³³⁾ Cfr. HEIM, “The [God-]forsaken king”, 306.

ebraico, che agitava i cuori anche al tempo di Gesù. Come esempio del modo con cui si delineava la figura del messia davidico in epoca postesilica, e quindi postmonarchica, qualcuno suggerisce Ger 23,1-6⁽³⁴⁾. Penso che l'esempio sia interessante, anche perché nel Sal 89 esistono numerosi punti in comune con un altro brano geremianico, Ger 33,14-26⁽³⁵⁾.

Di questa dimensione personale del "messia" testimonia il v. 52b. Tra le varie spiegazioni della singolare espressione עֲקֵבוֹת מְשִׁיחַ, "i calcagni/le orme del tuo messia", quella che più si accorda con il contesto sembra essere quella che vi vede un riferimento al v. 46⁽³⁶⁾, in cui si faceva allusione alla deportazione del giovane re Ioiachin (cfr. 2 Re 24,13)⁽³⁷⁾. Il verbo חָרַף "coprire di vergogna" (v. 52b) richiama infatti il sostantivo בֹּשֶׁשׁ di v. 46b.

4. La benedizione finale (v. 53)

Il v. 53 viene considerato generalmente, dicevamo, avulso dal contesto, come la conclusione redazionale del III libro del salterio. Effettivamente il ritmo è diverso dal resto del salmo (3 + 2 accenti), e il genere letterario della benedizione stacca dalla precedente supplica⁽³⁸⁾. A JHWH i versetti precedenti si dirigevano in forma diretta, mentre ora si parla di lui in terza persona. Lo stacco dal brano precedente non potrebbe essere più netto, e la somiglianza con la conclusione degli altri libri è palese (cfr. 41,14; 72,19; 106,48).

E tuttavia alcuni indizi uniscono il v. 53 ai vv. 47-52: sono il tetragramma divino (vv. 47.52 e 53) e il lessema אָמֵן (v. 50, אֲמִינוּךְ, v. 53, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן)⁽³⁹⁾. Ma soprattutto è chiara l'inclusione con l'inizio del salmo, il v. 2. Oltre ai due lessemi יְהוָה וְאָמֵן, c'è anche l'altro termine עוֹלָם ad unire i due versi, e il verbo שִׁיר (v. 2a) corrisponde semanticamente al verbo בָּרַךְ (v. 53a). Inoltre al v. 2a si parla di Dio in terza persona, come al v. 53.

All'inizio del salmo, l'autore aveva manifestato il proposito di "cantare sempre le misericordie di JHWH" (v. 2). Se il salmo finisse al v. 52, tale proposito si rivelerebbe falso. Alcuni autori si avvedono di questo e spiegano tale sfasatura come propositale, con l'intenzione implicita di muovere Dio all'azione⁽⁴⁰⁾. Essi avrebbero ragione se il salmo finisse con il v. 52. Ma se teniamo in conto anche il v. 53, allora non si può più parlare di discrepanza tra volere e fare: la volontà espressa al v. 2 (עוֹלָם אֲשִׁירָה) si compie al v. 53 (בָּרַךְ...לְעוֹלָם)⁽⁴¹⁾.

⁽³⁴⁾ SAUR, *Die Königspsalmen*, 176, nota 108.

⁽³⁵⁾ Cfr. VEJOLA, *Verheissung*, 58, 82-85.

⁽³⁶⁾ Sul riferimento del v. 46 a Ioiachin cfr. HOSSFELD – ZENGER, *Psalmen 51–100*, 595-596. Hossfeld parla al riguardo di un segno di solidarietà con la Golah babilonese.

⁽³⁷⁾ In questo senso A. MAILLOT – A. LELIÈVRE, *Les psaumes* (Genève 1962-1969) II, 234; L. ALONSO SCHÖKEL – C. CARNITI, *I Salmi* (Roma 1993) II, 247; TOURNAY, "Note", 389.

⁽³⁸⁾ Cfr. SAUR, *Die Königspsalmen*, 181.

⁽³⁹⁾ La continuità del lessema אָמֵן non solo con i vv. 47-52, ma anche con i vv. 2-38 viene sottolineata da COLE, *The shape*, 181.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Cfr. H. SPIECKERMANN, "Die ganze Erde ist seiner Herrlichkeit voll". Pantheismus im Alten Testament?", *Gottes Liebe zu Israel. Studien zur Theologie des Alten Testaments* (FAT 33; Tübingen 2001) 72; HOSSFELD – Zenger, *Psalmen 51–100*, 597.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Come conferma dell'appartenenza del v. 53 al contesto del Sal 89, posso addurre le conclusioni a cui sono giunto esaminando la benedizione finale del Sal 72. Si veda il mio: "The risks of a fragmented reading of the psalms: Psalm 72 as a case in point", di prossima apparizione in ZAW.

Sottolineo soprattutto la ripresa del lessema עָלַם, perché essa fa apparire la descrizione della collera divina narrata ai vv. 39-46 come una misura temporanea, di carattere correttivo (cfr. vv. 31-33). “Per sempre” invece è l’alleanza con Davide (cfr. 3.5.29.37.38); e conseguentemente “per sempre” durerà la lode del salmista (vv. 2.53), al di là del lamento dei vv. 39-52. L’intonare la lode alla fine del salmo sottintende la certezza che Dio ristabilirà la casa di Davide, esaudendo la preghiera del suo fedele⁽⁴²⁾.

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La nostra indagine sulla parte finale del Sal 89 ha messo in luce soprattutto due cose. Anzitutto, il fatto che essa ha due valenze: da una parte collega il Sal 89 con i salmi vicini, dall’altra è perfettamente inserita nel contesto stesso del Sal 89. Il v. 47 richiama quasi letteralmente Sal 79,5; i vv. 48-49 sono strettamente collegati con i Sal 88 e 90; il v. 51b attualizza il messaggio del Sal 87; il v. 53 si colloca sulla linea dei salmi 41,14; 72,19 e 106,48. E tuttavia ognuno di questi versetti ha importanti legami sia lessicali sia tematici con i versi che precedono. Al limite, ciò potrebbe spiegarsi anche con l’opera di un redattore, che avrebbe inserito dei ritocchi in un salmo precedente al momento di inserirlo in questo punto strategico del salterio⁽⁴³⁾. Ma tali e tanti sono i legami di ogni supposta aggiunta con il resto del salmo, che l’opera di questo redattore non si distinguerebbe molto da quella dell’autore⁽⁴⁴⁾.

In secondo luogo, il tenore della supplica dei vv. 47-52, e soprattutto quello della benedizione del v. 53, fa intravedere un forte elemento di fiducia. Il Sal 89 non si chiude con un lamento sulla fine della monarchia, ma con la speranza in un compimento della promessa fatta a Davide, al di là della presente situazione negativa. Non fa meraviglia, perciò, che la speranza messianica (in senso personale, non soltanto collettivo) non si limiti al cosiddetto “salterio messianico”⁽⁴⁵⁾, ma, al di là del Sal 89, permei tutto il salterio,

⁽⁴²⁾ Nello stesso senso anche COLE, *The shape*, 180. Saur giunge ad una conclusione simile, pur supponendo il carattere aggiunto del v. 53 (SAUR, *Die Königspsalmen*, 181-182). Così anche Heim (“The [God-]forsaken king”, 304).

⁽⁴³⁾ Per un’unità “redazionale” del Sal 89 si pronunciano, ad esempio, RENAUD, “La cohérence littéraire”, 428-431, e SARNA, “Psalm 89”.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Per l’unità originale del Sal 89 si schierano WARD, “The literary form”, 324; V. RAVANELLI, “Aspetti letterari del salmo 89”, *Liber Annuus* 30 (1980) 7-45, 44; M. GIRARD, *Les Psaumes redécouverts. De la structure au sens* (Montréal 1996) II, 495; EMMENDÖRFFER, *Der ferne Gott*, 239; AUFFRET, “Tu as juré”, 54.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Sul concetto di “salterio messianico” (che comprenderebbe i salmi 2-89*) cfr. RÖSEL, *Die messianische Redaktion*. La nostra analisi ci porta a prendere le distanze dalla posizione di Berges, secondo cui con il Sal 89 la speranza nella monarchia davidica si sarebbe estinta (BERGES, “Die Knechte”, 157): essa si indirizzerebbe in senso teocratico (160) e democratico (159). La posizione di Berges è abbastanza diffusa nell’esegesi contemporanea sui salmi, e riflette fondamentalmente l’impulso dato da G.H. WILSON, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (SBL.DS 76; Chico, CA 1985) (si veda ad esempio p. 215). Nello stesso senso si pone, ad esempio, M. LEUENBERGER, *Konzeptionen des Königtums Gottes im Psalter. Untersuchungen zu Komposition und Redaktion der theokratischen Bücher IV-V innerhalb des Psalters* (ATHANT 83; Zürich 2004). A nostro avviso, una simile posizione non tiene abbastanza in conto la conclusione del Sal 89, in cui la speranza nella dinastia davidica certo non è data come estinta.

trovando espressione anche nei libri quarto (cfr. Sal 101) e quinto (cfr. Sal 110; 132; 144).

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SUMMARY

The petition (vv. 47-52) and the final blessing (v. 53) which conclude Ps 89 are not additions to the original psalm, as often held. While these verses indeed join Ps 89 to the surrounding psalms and to the Psalter as a whole, they are also closely connected with the rest of the psalm itself, which without them, would lack certain basic elements for its understanding. Verses 47-53 go beyond the complaint of vv. 39-46 to conclude Ps 89 on a note of hope. The anger of YHWH cannot last forever, because his fidelity to the promise he made to David lasts forever. These considerations serve to moderate an exclusively theocratic and democratic interpretation of the Psalter, restoring attention to the messianic dimension as such.

Verb Forms of עָמַם in Ezekiel and Lamentations

Verb forms of the root עָמַם appears three or perhaps four times in the Hebrew Bible, three of which are in the book of Ezekiel: Ezek 28,3; 31,8; 32,19 (as will be argued here); and once in Lam 4,1. The standard lexicons do not guide the translator by drawing upon standard, classic Hebrew semantic families, but rather typically turn to the Arabic cognate of *gamma*, “to cover, veil, conceal”⁽¹⁾. This direction leaves the translator with a great deal of freedom, allowing the reader to be guided by context and his or her instincts. At stake is whether or not the ancient writers lead the modern student of these texts toward an understanding of these verses, and with this, a consistency in translation of the verb forms of עָמַם in these verses.

BDB links the verb forms in Ezek 28,3, 31,8, and Lam 4,1 with a second meaning of עָמַם, and defines it as “to darken, dim”⁽²⁾. Similarly, HALOT understands the verb at its base to mean “to cover”, but leading to the meaning of “to cause one to complain”⁽³⁾. In regard to Ezek 32,19, both HALOT and BDB derive this instance from נָעַם, “to be lovely”⁽⁴⁾. In this article, I will argue that these verb forms should be viewed as denominatives derived from the common noun עָם and the preposition עַם. Moreover, all four instances belong to this same root and semantic range, and once read in this light, a more precise and consistent reading of these four verses is possible.

The problem with עָמַם rests in the fact that there is not an easily identifiable root or verb form in Hebrew. Turning to Arabic, however, is not satisfying in the end. The context of each of the four verses (Ezek 28,3; 31,8; 32,19 and Lam 4,1) in which a verb form of עָמַם is read is not covered by a semantic range meaning “to darken or dim”, or even “to grieve”. To begin with, it is a stretch to derive the sense that no mystery is too difficult for the Prince of Tyre in Ezek 28,3, if one understands the basic meaning of עָמַם to be to darken or dim in Ezek 31,8. This semantic range does make some sense within the context of a garden of trees in Ezek 31, but here the verb is used actively, i.e., no other tree overshadows the cedar. In Lam 4,1, it is a passive concept (Hp-stem); the gold itself grows dim. To unify these two meanings under one semantic umbrella of “to darken or dim”, while possible, still does not seem natural. In addition, נָעַם in Ezek 32,19 is not connected with the root עָמַם by scholars or the lexicons, but rather with the root נָעַם (“to be lovely”). And yet, the context here seems to call for a verb of association, not sardonic praise of Egypt’s beauty.

If, however, one turns to the noun עָם and the preposition עַם from which to derive the semantic range, then the four verb forms cohere together quite well, with clarity and insight being brought to the Biblical texts in question.

(1) See H. WEHR – I. COWAN – J. MILTON, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (Ithaca, NY 1976) 683.

(2) BDB, 770.

(3) HALOT, II, 846.

(4) HALOT, II, 705; BDB, 653.

Fundamentally, עַם indicates an “agnate relationship”⁽⁵⁾, which is reflected in the lexical entries as well, and whose etymology is traced back to the concept of “paternal uncle”⁽⁶⁾. Most interestingly, within the Hebrew Bible עַם is found in the burial formula, נִאֲכַף אֶל-עַמּוֹ, meaning literally “be gathered to his ancestors”⁽⁷⁾. Conversely, as a noun, עַם is used in the banishment formula, וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַזֹּאת מֵעַמָּה (“his soul was cut off from his people”) to indicate expulsion from the community, perhaps with origins in the ancestor cult⁽⁸⁾. Additionally, the covenant formula “I will be your God, and you will be my people” emphasizes a close family relationship, indicating that “Yahweh and Israel would be understood henceforth as a kind of family”⁽⁹⁾. As a collective, עַם indicates the general assembly of the Israelites, or of the People of the Land of Judah (i.e., עַם הָאָרֶץ, “the people of the land”), or the post-exilic assembly⁽¹⁰⁾. This survey provides a view of the semantic range of עַם, that being a kinship association. Simply, עַם denotes the sense of being properly associated, indeed, genetically belonging together. If this sense is then applied to verb forms derived from the noun form, not only are the passages in question brought into clearer focus, but new nuances of meaning become evident in these verses, shedding further insight into the worldview of their authors.

I

It always seems best to move from the clearest contexts to the more difficult, and so, Ezek 31,8 provides a good starting point for this brief study. NRSV, NJPS, and most commentators translate עַם in 31,8 in the sense of comparing the specific cedar/Assyria⁽¹¹⁾ to other trees, and finding none to be worthy of such a comparison⁽¹²⁾. Greenberg presents a departure from the crowd, using the root meaning of “to darken” in order to translate: “Cedars in God’s Garden could not overshadow him”⁽¹³⁾, which in this instance seems to offer a less probable option. The context of chapter 31 creates a broad avenue for our entrance to this study, for this chapter is a focused unit, which compares Egypt to Assyria (cf. v. 31,2, אֶל-מִי דְמִית בְּגִדְלֶךָ, “To whom do you

⁽⁵⁾ See E. LIPÍŃSKI, “עַם”, *TDOT*, XI, 165, 169.

⁽⁶⁾ *HALOT*, II, 837; *BDB*, 766.

⁽⁷⁾ LIPÍŃSKI, “עַם”, *TDOT*, XI, 170.

⁽⁸⁾ LIPÍŃSKI, “עַם”, *TDOT*, XI, 171. Foreshadowing the discussion of Ezek 32,19 below, connections with the ancestor cult provide an especially important nuance in regard to the use of the עַם in a poem that ultimately associates dead Egypt with dead Assyria.

⁽⁹⁾ LIPÍŃSKI, “עַם”, *TDOT*, XI, 172.

⁽¹⁰⁾ LIPÍŃSKI, “עַם”, *TDOT*, XI, 174-5.

⁽¹¹⁾ Many scholars emend the text to of Ezek 31,3 from אֲשֶׁר (“Assyria”) to רִמֹן (“a cypress”), but with no supporting evidence. As M. Odell has very clearly argued (*Ezekiel* [Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, GA 2005] 392) the MT should be maintained, and Assyria should be read as the antecedent to the cedar of Lebanon in this passage.

⁽¹²⁾ See, for example, W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia 1983) II, 143 (“could not rival”) and 150 (for discussion); L. BOADT, *Ezekiel’s Oracles against Egypt. A Literary and Philological Study of Ezekiel 29–32* (BibOr 37; Rome 1980) 111; D.I. BLOCK, *The Book of Ezekiel. Chapters 25–48* (NICOT; Grand Rapids 1998) 183 (“cedars ... cannot compare”); K.-F. POHLMANN, *Das Buch des Propheten Hesekiel (Ezekiel)*. Kapitel 20–48 (ATD 22/2; Göttingen 2001) 421, (“kamen ihr nicht gleich”).

⁽¹³⁾ M. GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 21–37* (AB 22a; New York 1997) 635 and 639.

compare in your grandeur”), a one-time great cedar tree in the garden of God. Verses 3–9, in rich poetic language, extol the beauty of Assyria, which merely serves to heighten the impact of its ensuing fall, and by association, that of Egypt as well. Clearly, v. 8 looks to compare the other trees in the Garden of God to the cedar, representing Assyria, but to no avail; אֲרִיזִים לֹא־עִמְמָהוּ בְּגַן־אֱלֹהִים (“The cedars do not belong with it in the Garden of God”, my translation). The sense expressed by the using a verb from the root עִמַּם, when one reads this verb within the semantic range of close family relationship, moves the reader beyond a mere superficial comparison to the sense of which of the trees truly belong to the same genus or species as the cedar/Assyria. Such a nuance of meaning is similarly strengthened and confirmed by the reference to the Garden of God. For one of the goals of Gen 2 is to narrate a story of the process of Women and Men belonging together (cf., vv. 23–24), in contrast to all the other animals of creation (Gen 2,18–20).

More challenging is the use of עִמַּם in Ezek 28,3b, a verse that, in extolling the wisdom of the Prince (נִינְי) of Tyre (v. 1), praises him for surpassing in wisdom the legendary sage, Daniel (v. 3a). Commentators, in this instance, look to the sense of “to darken” for the verb, and understand this sentence to mean that secrets do not dim, or baffle the enlightened mind of the Prince of Tyre⁽¹⁴⁾. Likewise, H.-P. Müller derives his translation from this basic understanding of “to darken”, but translates with the meaning of “to grieve” in this context (“Nichts Verborgenes bereitet dir Kummer”)⁽¹⁵⁾. The problem here, however, is that if the sense of the verb in 28,3 is accepted to be something along the lines of “to baffle or perplex”, the meaning of the verb form of עִמַּם in this verse separates itself from the sense seen earlier in Ezek 31,8, “to associate, belong, compare”, a problem noted by van Dijk⁽¹⁶⁾. Van Dijk’s solution is to translate 28,3 “No mystery is too deep for you”, understanding the meaning of depth as containing the mirror image of and thus connected with the sense of being higher than the mighty cedar of 31,8, which seems forced⁽¹⁷⁾. This problem falls away, however, if עִמַּם is understood as a denominative verb, setting within the semantic family of עָמַם. In this semantic range, the literal meaning of the sentence is that all the mysteries do not match the wisdom of the Prince of Tyre. A more dynamic translation of the sentence in question, כֹּל־סִתְרוֹם לֹא עִמְמִיךָ, would then be “No mystery is your equal”. This solution, it must be highlighted, is found also in

⁽¹⁴⁾ See the discussions of ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel*, II, 74–75; F. FECHTER, *Bewältigung der Katastrophe* (BZAW 208; New York 1992) 158, cf. also n. 224; GREENBERG, *Ezekiel* 21–37, 574; POHLMANN, *Hesekiel*, II, 389; and BLOCK, *Ezekiel*, 91. The NRSV also translates this sentence with this semantic range.

⁽¹⁵⁾ See both “Magisch-mantische Weisheit und die Gestalt Daniels”, *Ugarit-Forschungen* 1 (ed. K. BERGERHOF et alii) (Neukirchener-Vluyn 1969) 81; and “Mantische Weisheit und Apokalyptik”, *Congress Volume* (ed. G.W. ANDERSON et alii) (VTS 22; Leiden 1972) 278.

⁽¹⁶⁾ H.J. van Dijk states: “No hypothesis yet satisfied the context of both Ez 28,3 and Ez 31,8” (*Ezekiel’s Prophecy on Tyre* (Ez. 26,1–28,19). A New Approach (BibOr 20; Rome 1968) 100.

⁽¹⁷⁾ VAN DIJK, *Ezekiel’s Prophecy*, 100–101. The influence of Mitchell Dahood is clearly seen throughout van Dijk’s study, but specifically, in regard to Ezek 28,3, he cites Dahood’s note in his Psalms commentary, where Dahood connects עִמַּם with עָמַם (*Psalms* I: 1–50 [AB 16; New York 1965] 113).

the translation of Ezek 28,3 in NJPS: "In no hidden matter can anyone // Compare to you".

Lamentations 4,1 takes this inquiry out of the book of Ezekiel and out of the Nebi'im altogether, but perhaps linguistically, not so very far afield⁽¹⁸⁾. Typically, translations and commentaries render this verb form of עָמַם in the sense of being dim or dull in luster, drawing upon the meaning of "to darken" seen earlier⁽¹⁹⁾. Hillers identifies the problem with this traditional translation of Lam 4,1. First, as Hillers has emphasized, gold does not in fact dim, nor do passages in the Hebrew Bible dealing figuratively with gold speak of it dimming in its luster. Second, the antecedent⁽²⁰⁾ standing behind the metaphorical use of gold in Lam 4,2, the children of Zion, has been devalued not because of some internal deterioration — indeed, they remain precious as gold (cf. v. 4,2a), but rather, they have merely been reckoned, or yet better, associated with common pottery⁽²¹⁾. Hillers, in contrast, translates the verse "How the gold is despised!"⁽²²⁾, which stills seems out of step with the broader context of the passage. The images of the passage consistently focus on how once socially separated elites, whose status and behavior set them apart, have been reduced to degrading statuses and behaviors lower than that of commoners. Royalty, who once "feasted on delicacies" and were clothed in purple, now perish in the streets and visit "ash heaps" (v. 5). Princes, described as being white and pure, are dark as soot (vv. 7-8). These images, and this lament as a whole, deal with associations⁽²³⁾, featuring classes of people, who, once set apart by their place in Jerusalem and Zion's royal and priestly operations, are now classified together with the "sub-common". Verses 1 and 2, as an introduction to this lament, then draws upon the nature of gold as *sui generis* to illustrate the proper understanding of the nature of Zion's elite, and, by using a Hp-stem of עָמַם, state that they have now been associated together with the profane realm. And so, the second line of the strophe states "The sacred stones are cast out to the outside world"

⁽¹⁸⁾ See F.W. Dobbs-Allsopp's linguistic study, which places both of the books of Lamentations and Ezekiel in sixth century BCE in regard to use and development of Hebrew ("Linguistic Evidence for the Date of Lamentations", *JANESCU* 26 (1998) 1-36, especially p. 35).

⁽¹⁹⁾ In addition to NRSV and NJPS, see also C. WESTERMANN, *Lamentations*. Issues and Interpretation (Minneapolis 1994) 193, 196; J. RENKEMA, *Lamentations* (Historical Commentary on the Old Testament; Leuven 1998) 491-492; A. BERLIN, *Lamentations* (OTL; Louisville 2002) 104; and F. W. DOBBS-ALLSOPP, *Lamentations* (IBC; Louisville 2002) 130.

⁽²⁰⁾ The term "antecedent" (see also n. 10) is used here to identify the subject of the metaphor. "Tenor" is another term sometimes found in scholarship. See, e.g., J. GALAMBUSH, *Jerusalem in the book of Ezekiel: The City as Yahweh's Wife* (SBLDS 130; Atlanta 1992) 4; citing I.A. RICHARDS, "The Philosophy of Rhetoric", *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor* (ed. M. JOHNSON) (Minneapolis 1981) 48-62.

⁽²¹⁾ D.R. HILLERS, *Lamentations* (AB 7a; New York 1982), 78. BERLIN, *Lamentations*, 104, and Dobbs-Allsopp challenge Hillers on this point, Dobbs-Allsopp stating: "... the occurrence of the impossible pointedly underscores the severity of the situation" (*Lamentations*, 130).

⁽²²⁾ HILLERS, *Lamentations*, 75.

⁽²³⁾ Note that the comparative use of יָדַע occurs five times in Lam 4 (vv. 6a, 7a, 8a, 9a, 19a). This fact alone signals the interest of this lament with the new classification of the post-587 Judah, Jerusalem, and the "children of Zion".

(תשחפכנה אבני־קדש בראש כל־חוצות)⁽²⁴⁾. With this in mind, a dynamic translation that would better convey the connotation of being cast into the midst of the common, profane world might be: “Alas! Gold has been reckoned to be like all other metals!”⁽²⁵⁾.

This brings the study back to Ezekiel for the final instance of עָמַם functioning as a verb, seen in the sentence מִמִּי נִעְמַת רִדְדָה וְהִשְׁכַּבָּה (‘‘With whom do you belong? Go down, lie down with the uncircumcised, in the midst of those slain by the sword’’, Ezek 32,19). To begin with, reading נִעְמַת as a verbal form derived from the root עָמַם is a departure from most scholars’ reading of this verse, who derive this verb form from the root נָעַם, ‘‘to be lovely’’. Commonly, commentators and the translations read this word as a second person singular perfect G-stem of the root נָעַם⁽²⁶⁾. However, in light of the use of עָמַם twice before in Ezekiel’s oracles against the nations, as well as issues of context (to be detailed below), it is fair to raise the question whether or not this form should actually be read as a second person singular perfect N-stem of עָמַם; the forms for the two roots would be identical⁽²⁷⁾.

Several indicators seem to point in the direction of reading this word as a N-stem of עָמַם. First, as mentioned above, the verbal form of the root עָמַם appears twice elsewhere in the book of Ezekiel. Nowhere else in Ezekiel, other than here in 32,19, does נָעַם appear. Also in this connection, the N-stem replaced the G-passive in use, and so, assuming Ezekiel and/or later tradents had a preference for עָמַם, this would lead the reader to expect the N-stem here. More importantly, however, context tips the scales in favor of reading נִעְמַת as the root of this verb in 32,19. Like Ezek 31,8, the question the text presents is one of proper association. With whom does the dead nation of Egypt belong? The question is not one of loveliness or Egypt’s level of goodness or righteousness⁽²⁸⁾. Moreover, if one considers the connotations of the cult of

⁽²⁴⁾ The noun חֲצוּצָה in this line is pregnant with meaning. It carries the general meaning of exposure to the outside realm (cf. *HALOT*, II, 298). In the four instances of the phrase בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל־חֲצוּצָה in the Hebrew Bible (Isa 51,20; Nah 3,10; Lam 2,19; and here in 4,1), it seems to convey the sense of being at the public end of a lane leading out from the family home in an ancient city, i.e., an ancient, urban equivalent of a driveway or a private lane today. Here, then it would mark the place where the sanctity and privacy of the family ended, and the public space begins. Within the context of sacred gem stones, this location would mark the space where the profane world began.

⁽²⁵⁾ The translation of this verse into English is awkward because the most succinct translation, closest to the Hebrew, would be along the lines of ‘‘Gold has become common’’. However, this translation into English would actually imply that the economic situation was so strong that gold and wealth were abundant and available to all, thus running quite the opposite of what was intended by the Hebrew.

⁽²⁶⁾ In addition to the NRSV, NJPS, as well as BDB, 653, and *HALOT*, II, 705; see the commentaries of BOADT, *Ezekiel’s Oracles against Egypt*, 153; ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel*, II, 164; GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 21–37*, 659, 661; POHLMANN, *Hesekiel*, II, 435, 438; and BLOCK, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 215. Boadt, Greenberg, and Block point out that נָעַם carries more the sense of being good, rather than being lovely, and is often times used parallel with נָאֵם, in Hebrew and other Northwest Semitic languages.

⁽²⁷⁾ Although an epenthetic δ -vowel normally appears in the N-stem of geminate roots, they may also, at times, be missing, as seen in תָּכַנִּי (Num 17,28; cf. GCK §67dd).

⁽²⁸⁾ See the comments of Boadt, Greenberg, and Block regarding this nuance of נָעַם, which links it with the concept of goodness נָאֵם (cf. note 25, above).

the dead carried within the semantic range of עָמַם, this song, which condemns Egypt to the far reaches of the netherworld, would be the ideal context in which to expect the use of עָמַם⁽²⁹⁾. The text of Ezek 32,19, then, is asking a straightforward question as Egypt enters the Sheol: "With whom do you belong?" a question that parallels the question of Ezek 31,8. The answer, of course, is the uncircumcised former ally of Egypt, the dead nation Assyria.

II

This perspective, in addition to clarifying the four texts discussed here, leads to another, slightly more nuanced picture of the intellectual circles of Jerusalem at the time of Judah's destruction in roughly the first half of the sixth century BCE. The infrequent use of a verb from the root עָמַם indicates that this form represents a high use of Hebrew, perhaps even a playful use of the language — the application of the language by someone comfortable and skilled with the craft of writing. It points to Judah's intelligentsia, a conclusion confirmed by its threefold appearance in the book of Ezekiel, which derived from a priest who was a part of the 597 deportation and widely regarded as a well-read literatus⁽³⁰⁾. The same could be said for the later tradents who carried forward the prophet's work. Even in regard to Lamentations, the fact that the poems have the character of being produced as written texts, as is widely held⁽³¹⁾, points to the domain of the intelligentsia that remained in the land, and which would very likely have been associated with the royal court (e.g., seen in the general picture of the reading, destroying, and again writing of Jeremiah and Baruch's scroll narrated in Jer 36). Although speculative, it seems reasonable to see in the mourners who passed through Mizpah the day after the murder of Gedeliah, while on their way to the temple (Jer 41,5), a circle of tradents like the ones that would have produced the laments of Lamentations⁽³²⁾.

More precisely, the verbal forms of עָמַם underscores once more the concern over social order current at that time in the elite and priestly circles of Judean and Jerusalemite society. This concern went beyond mere egotistical interests in honor, but rather the development of this verbal use of עָמַם in the sixth century reveals theological, cosmic concerns raised by the catastrophe of 587. The Judean and Jerusalemite elite held to the belief that they served on God's holy mountain, Mount Zion, and thereby the threshold between heaven and earth. As the keepers of the threshold to heaven within

⁽²⁹⁾ Again, see LIPINSKI, ע, *TDOT*, XI, 171.

⁽³⁰⁾ See D. BODI, *The Book of Ezekiel and the Poem of Erra* (OBO 104; Göttingen 1991). For an examination of Ezekiel as a writing prophet, see E. DAVIS, *Swallowing the Scroll*. Textuality and the Dynamics of Discourse in Ezekiel's Prophecy (JSOTSS 78; Sheffield 1989).

⁽³¹⁾ See the summary of the field in DOBBS-ALLSOPP, *Lamentations*, 4–5; and WESTERMANN, *Ezekiel*, 61–633 and 100–101. Westermann, however, disputes the conclusion that the laments were written texts, instead arguing that they were originally composed and transmitted orally (pp. 100–4).

⁽³²⁾ See also Berlin's comments on this issue in regard to Lamentations, which are most reasonable. She also mentions Zech 7,5 and 8,19 in connection with the tradition of mourning the destruction of the first temple (cf. BERLIN, *Lamentations*, 35–36).

the priestly nation (Exod 19,6), it was through them that the nations would be blessed (Gen 12,1-3). The shock of the destruction of the temple and of Jerusalem went beyond the personal; it touched a theological doctrine that shaped their view of the cosmos. Such shock could not be more pointedly and powerfully expressed than in the succinct cry of Lam 4,1, **אֵיכָה יָעַם זָהָב**, "Alas! Gold has been reckoned to be like all other metals!" Ironically, the persistence of this little nation's belief in its role in the cosmic order, as it turned out, proved to be more powerful than the external destruction it faced, so that these views of Israel's unique status endured beyond the Babylonians, beyond the Persians, and eventually beyond the Greeks and the Romans as well.

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SUMMARY

Verb forms from the root **עַמַּם** are defined in the lexicons as "to dim, darken," drawing upon Arabic for guidance. This definition, however, does not allow for a consistent translation in the texts where these verb forms appear. It is proposed here that the verb forms be understood as denominatives from the common noun **עַם** and the preposition **עַם**, which are a part of the semantic family, indicating an agnate relationship. This understanding is applied to the four instances in the Hebrew Bible where these verb forms appear: Ezek 28,3; 31,8; Ezek 32,19; and Lam 4,1. Each verse addresses a question of association or belonging. The development of these denominative forms reflects concerns over the issue of status for the Judean exiles in the sixth century BCE.

Haggai 2,17 – A New Analysis

הכיתי אתכם בשדפון ובירקון ובברד
את כל מעשה ידיכם ואין אתכם אלי נאסיה

I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and mildew and hail;
yet you did not return to me, says the LORD (1) (Hag 2,17).

The translation of Hag 2,17 is fairly straightforward, with the notable exception of the syntactically problematic expression ואין אתכם אלי, which has been variously described as being “among the most difficult in Haggai” (2), as “barbaric” Hebrew (3), “hardly comprehensible” (4), “hopelessly corrupt” (5), and textually “indefensible” (6). Those scholars who attempt to make sense of the Masoretic Text (MT) as it currently stands typically interpret אתכם as marking the grammatical subject of the clause (7). Consequently, attention is usually drawn to the force of the preposition אל which, it is argued, either has a dynamic sense indicating movement towards a person or else has a dispositional sense that indicates being “on the side of” the Lord (8). Alternatively, it has been suggested that the expression indicates that the Israelites are “as nothing” to the Lord (9). One of the chief obstacles to interpretations such as these, however, is the fact that the use of את to mark the grammatical subject is a highly disputed topic (10).

While the difficult nature of the MT speaks in favor of its originality (11), it is typically concluded that the text is corrupt. The verse is frequently viewed as a gloss on Amos 4,9, which reads as follows:

(1) Translations are cited from the New Revised Standard Version.

(2) C. MEYERS – E. MEYERS, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8* (AB; Garden City 1987) 61.

(3) Thus Ehrlich’s *Randglossen*, cited by D. PETERSEN, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8* (OTL; Philadelphia 1984) 86.

(4) H.-W. WOLFF, *Haggai* (Continental Commentary; Minneapolis 1988) 58.

(5) T. MURAOKA, *Emphatic Words and Structures in Biblical Hebrew* (Jerusalem – Leiden 1985) 157.

(6) H. MITCHELL ET AL, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah* (ICC; Edinburgh 1912) 75. For helpful summaries of the scholarly discussion, see J. KESSLER, *The Book of Haggai. Prophecy and Society in Early Persian Yehud* (VTS 91; Leiden 2002) 199, n. 20; J. KOOLE, *Haggai* (Commentaar op het Oude Testament; Kampen 1967) 90; D. CLARK, “Problems in Haggai 2.15–19”, *BT* 34.4 (1983) 432–439.

(7) Cf. KESSLER, *The Book of Haggai*, 200, n. 20.

(8) For the former view, see KESSLER, *The Book of Haggai*, 200 n. 20 and C.F. KEIL, *The Minor Prophets* (Peabody 2006) 493; for the latter see CLARK, “Problems”, 435; PETERSEN, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 86, 92; cf. VERHOEF, *Haggai and Malachi*, 128. On the meaning of אל, see further below.

(9) R.L. SMITH, *Micah–Malachi* (WBC 32, Waco, TX 1984) 159, 161; cf. MEYERS – MEYERS, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 61. If this were intended, however, one would have expected כאל as in Hag 2,3.

(10) See especially J. BLAU, “Zum angeblichen Gebrauch von ’t vor dem Nominativ”, *VT* 4 (1954) 7–19 and MURAOKA, *Emphatic Words*, 146–158.

(11) Cf. P. VERHOEF, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi* (NICOT; Grand Rapids 1989) 128; KESSLER, *The Book of Haggai*, 200, n. 20.

הכיתי אתכם בשדפון ובירקון הרבות נותים וכרמים
ותאנים חיתכם יאכל הגוש ולאשבתם עדי נאסיהוה

I struck you with blight and mildew; I laid waste your gardens
and your vineyards; the locust devoured your fig trees and your olive trees;
yet you did not return to me, says the LORD.

The occurrence of the phrase הכיתי אתכם בשדפון ובירקון in both Amos 4,9 and Hag 2,17 has led many to suggest on the basis Amos' ולאשבתם עדי that a verb such as שבה is to be restored to Haggai's text⁽¹²⁾. One should not be too quick to assume that Haggai was dependent on the text of Amos, however⁽¹³⁾, since the similarities between the two texts are arguably more superficial than real. The fact of the matter is that the short phrase בשדפון ובירקון constitutes the only material in common between the two passages. The repetition of הכיתי אתכם can hardly be viewed as convincing evidence of literary dependence, given how frequently both the verb נכה and the object marker את occur in the Hebrew Bible. Moreover, even the occurrence of two relatively infrequent Biblical lexemes (ירקון, שדפון) in such close proximity in both passages does not provide compelling evidence of a gloss either: the two words were very frequently linked together in pre-modern Hebrew, and always with שדפון preceding ירקון, suggesting that this was simply a standard collocation⁽¹⁴⁾. Consequently one ought not to overestimate the significance of the fact that they occur together in Amos 4,9 as well as Hag 2,17.

In the end, most of the different emendations and interpretations of this troubling phrase sound remarkably similar to one another⁽¹⁵⁾, but it is nevertheless clear that a truly satisfactory explanation of the syntax of ואתך אתכם אלי has yet to be offered. The present study will attempt to clarify our understanding of the MT of Hag 2,17 by addressing three distinct issues:

⁽¹²⁾ See e.g. P. ACKROYD, "Studies in the Book of Haggai", *JJS* 3 (1952) 7; id., "Some Interpretative Glosses in the Book of Haggai", *JJS* 7 (1956) 166; SMITH, *Micah–Malachi*, 159; PETERSEN, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 86–88. The ancient versions lend a degree of plausibility to this proposal (cf. CLARK, "Problems", 435): the LXX of Hag 2,17 adds καὶ οὐκ ἐπιστρέψατε πρός με, while Amos contains the similar καὶ οὐδ' ὅς ἐπιστρέψατε πρός με; the Peshitta and Targum likewise include a verbal form for "turning". MEYERS – MEYERS, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 62, also suggest that a verb such as "brought" is to be supplied, though they argue that this is not a case of textual corruption but rather of omission due to metrical factors.

⁽¹³⁾ If Hag 2,17 is some kind of innertextual reference then it could just as easily be to Deut 28,22, which warns that the Lord will "strike" (יכה) his people with, *inter alia*, "blight and mildew" (ובשדפון ובירקון).

⁽¹⁴⁾ שדפון and ירקון always occur together in Biblical Hebrew (Deut 28,22; 1 Kings 8,37; Amos 4,9; Hag 2,17; 2 Chron 6,28), with the sole exception of Jer 30,6, in which ירקון occurs alone to indicate a pale or jaundiced face. The collocation likewise occurs in Qumran Hebrew (11Q14 f1ii:12; ירקון occurs alone in 4Q473 f2:6, but the text is fragmentary and what immediately precedes it is missing) and in Tannaitic Hebrew (m. Taan 3,5; m. Ar 9,1; Sifra, Behar 3,3; Sifra, Behuqqotai 2,5; Sifre Num 76; Sifre Deut 306; Sifre Zutta 10,9). The only exceptions that I am aware of in the Tannaitic period are a quotation of Jer 30,6 in Sifre Deut 1 and the occurrence of שדפון without ירקון in m. Taan 3,6, but this is immediately following upon 3,5, in which the two terms do occur together.

⁽¹⁵⁾ CLARK, "Problems", 435, even asserts that "it does not matter greatly whether the text is emended or not, as the meaning is much the same either way"; cf. also VERHOEF, *Haggai and Malachi*, 128; KESSLER, *The Book of Haggai*, 200, n. 20.

1. the meaning of the syntagm **וְאִין־אַחֲכֶם** itself, 2. the usage of the preposition **אֶל**, and 3. the analysis of this circumstantial clause in its exegetical context.

Crucial to a proper understanding of Hag 2,17 is the recognition that **וְאִין־אַחֲכֶם** should be analyzed as a type of possessive clause and means “you do/did not have”. Recent studies on the syntax of non-verbal clauses in Qumran Hebrew have adduced examples in which the syntagm **וְאִין** or **יֵשׁ** plus **אֶל** with a pronominal suffix is used to indicate possession or the lack thereof⁽¹⁶⁾. Note the following examples:

וְכֹל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יֵשׁ אִתּוֹ דְּבַר לְדַבֵּר לְרַבִּים

...and any man who has something to say to the Many... (1QS 6:12)

יֵשׁ אִתּוֹ דְּבַר לְדַבֵּר לְרַבִּים

I have something to say to the Many... (1QS 6:13)

וְאִין אִמְתָּ אִתָּם

...and there is no truth with them... ⁽¹⁷⁾ (4QJub^d 2:24 [=Jub 21:21]).

In fact, this syntagm is also attested in Biblical Hebrew:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשָׁפָט יֵשׁ אִתּוֹ דְּבַר־יְהוָה

Jehoshaphat said, ‘The word of the LORD is with him’ (2 Kings 3,12).

The consonantal text in this last mentioned example indicates that **אֶל** is to be read as the direct object marker, as the vocalization in Hag 2,17 indicates as well. It has been frequently noted, however, that there exists some confusion in the MT between the preposition **אֶל** and the *nota accusativi*⁽¹⁸⁾, and we do in fact encounter examples in Biblical Hebrew of **יֵשׁ** plus the preposition **אֶל** expressing possession. For example:

וְאִם־נִבְּאִים הֵם וְאִם־יֵשׁ דְּבַר־יְהוָה אִתָּם יַעֲרֹנָא בִּיהוָה צְבָאִים

If indeed they are prophets, and if the word of the LORD is with them, then let them intercede with the LORD of hosts... ⁽¹⁹⁾ (Jer 27,18).

Thus in the MT we find both the preposition **אֶל** and the *nota accusativi* used with the existential particle **יֵשׁ** to indicate possession. Regardless of whether one of these was the “grammatically correct” syntagm, it is in any event safe to conclude that **וְאִין־אַחֲכֶם** in Hag 2,17 is intended as a possessive clause: “and you have/had nothing”.

Once **וְאִין־אַחֲכֶם** is understood in this way, the other grammatical and exegetical issues surrounding the phrase fall more readily into place. As mentioned above, it is sometimes claimed that in Hag 2,17 the preposition **אֶל**

⁽¹⁶⁾ See M.F.J. BAASTEN, “Existential Clauses in Qumran Hebrew”, *Diggers at the Well*. Proceedings of a Third International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira (eds. T. MURAOKA – J.F. ELWOLDE) (STDJ 36; Leiden 2000) 10-11; ID., *The Non-Verbal Clause in Qumran Hebrew* (Ph.D. diss., Leiden University, 2006) 222.

⁽¹⁷⁾ See also 4Q223-224 (4QJub^b) 2 i 53 [=Jub 35,12].

⁽¹⁸⁾ Cf. P. JOÜON – T. MURAOKA, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Rome² 2006) § 103 j-k; HALOT I, 101.

⁽¹⁹⁾ See further *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* I, 449; BDB 86.

expresses a favorable disposition “towards” someone else, with appeal being made to examples such as 2 Kings 6,11 for support⁽²⁰⁾:

ויסער לב מלך-אֲרָם על-הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה וַיִּקְרָא אֶל-עֲבָדָיו
וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם הֲלוֹא תִגִּידוּ לִי מִי מִשְׁלֵנוּ אֶל-מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל

The mind of the king of Aram was greatly perturbed because of this;
he called his officers and said to them, ‘Now tell me who among
us sides with the king of Israel?’

On closer inspection of this example and ones like it, however, it appears that the evidence is against taking the preposition אֶל as indicative of a positive disposition “towards” a person⁽²¹⁾. Rather, it would appear that אֶל in such examples is to be taken in a spatial-directional sense which in some cases actually expresses opposition and antagonism towards someone else (אֶל = על = “against”). If וַיִּאֲרָאֲכֶם אֶל is understood as a possessive clause, then it is best to analyze אֶל in Hag 2,17 in a spatial-directional sense of “towards”; the phrase should thus be translated “you have/had nothing directed toward me” or, perhaps a bit more smoothly, “you direct(ed) nothing towards me”. It refers, then, to the people’s failure to direct their material possessions towards the rebuilding of the Lord’s temple⁽²²⁾.

How then does וַיִּאֲרָאֲכֶם אֶל function within this verse and within its larger context? Given that the people had already begun to change their ways and to work on rebuilding the temple, it appears that וַיִּאֲרָאֲכֶם אֶל refers to a past situation (“you had nothing”) rather than a present one (“you have nothing”). The first part of the verse refers to the Lord’s striking the people with punishments in the past, with וַיִּאֲרָאֲכֶם אֶל describing the circumstances under which the Lord had done so. Rather than taking the clause as adversative⁽²³⁾, it seems preferable to understand it as a circumstantial clause, either with a temporal nuance (“I struck you with blight ... while you had nothing directed towards me”) or a causal one (“I struck you ... for you had nothing directed towards me”).

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* *

While a plausible case could be made for revocalizing אֲרָאֲכֶם in Hag 2,17 from the *nota accusativi* to the preposition אֶל⁽²⁴⁾, what is clear in any event is that we are dealing with a type of possessive clause: The people failed to direct any of their material possessions towards the Lord for the rebuilding of his temple. וַיִּאֲרָאֲכֶם אֶל thus indicates the circumstances under which – or possibly the reasons on account of which – the Lord punished his people. With this interpretation of the clause, it emerges that Haggai’s third oracle

⁽²⁰⁾ Cf. KESSLER, *The Book of Haggai*, 200, n. 20. Other examples cited include Hos 3,3; Jer 15,1; Ezek 36,9.

⁽²¹⁾ See M. ROGLAND, “Pro or Contra? 2 Kings 6:11”, *Presbyterion* 27.1 (2001) 56-58.

⁽²²⁾ So, rightly, KOOLE, *Haggai*, 90: “De zaak is dus niet zozeer, dat het volk niet met bekering tot JHWH kwam, het gaat erom dat men geen arbeidskrachten en financiële middelen voor JHWH beschikbaar stelde”.

⁽²³⁾ So e.g. the NRSV (“...yet you did not return...”) and most other translations.

⁽²⁴⁾ Cf. KOOLE, *Haggai*, 90.

(Hag 2,10-19) reiterates the explicit connection made earlier in the first oracle (Hag 1,1-11) between the Lord's judgments and the people's past failure to rebuild the temple, even as the Lord is about to promise once more to bestow his blessings (2,19) in response to their changed behavior. This interpretation of Hag 2,17 not only makes sense of the current MT, it fits within the rest of the verse itself, Haggai's third oracle, and his prophecy as a whole.

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SUMMARY

The syntax of the phrase וְאִין־לָכֶם אֵלַי in Hag 2,17 has proven difficult to analyze, causing many scholars to suspect that the text is corrupt. This article argues, on the contrary, that the current Masoretic Text is understandable syntactically and that emendation is unnecessary. Examples from Qumran Hebrew and Biblical Hebrew are adduced to demonstrate that the syntagm לָכֶם אֵלַי is to be understood as a type of possessive clause. The usage of the preposition ל and the function of the clause as a whole are also analyzed, and it is argued that the phrase ought to be rendered "while you had nothing directed towards me" or "because you had nothing directed towards me". The phrase thus indicates that the judgment experienced by the people was due to their failure to direct that their material possessions towards the Lord for the rebuilding of his temple (cf. Hag 1,1-11).

The Design of the 'Dual Causality' Principle in the Narrative of Absalom's Rebellion

The principle of dual causality, according to which the same event is projected twice for two different reasons — Divine and human — is known among researchers of the Bible⁽¹⁾. Some have even suggested seeing this principle as the founding principle of the biblical historiography in general: "all biblical literature, as it appears before us, including all its parts and layers, expresses the principle of dual causality"⁽²⁾. Often, the development of the unconcealed plot of the story relies on human factors, while the Divine cause that sets the plot in motion can be felt only in a latent reading.

One of the outstanding stories in which this principle becomes evident to the reader is Absalom's rebellion⁽³⁾. On the surface level, the narrator credits Absalom's successes at the beginning of his rebellion as due to Absalom's wisdom and unique cunning: "so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel" (2 Sam 15,6); while his failure during the war with David is ascribed to Hushai's wisdom, which overcame Ahithophel's advice. However, various hints in the story, as well as the fact that structurally, the story of the rebellion is integrated into a wider cycle of stories, convey the message that this rebellion is but another stage in the punishment David receives because of his sin with Bathsheba. In a latent reading, it is obvious that the narrator encourages the reader to sense the Divine intervention throughout the complete story of the rebellion. This principle of dual causality in the story is realized through several explicit sayings, including: "For the LORD had ordained it to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom" (17,14), and Shimei's curse: "The LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned" (16,8). Additionally, David's attitude towards the curse reflects this principle: "let him alone and let him curse; for the LORD has bidden him" (16,11). This verse typifies David's perception throughout the whole story, and it is obvious that the narrator identifies with it⁽⁴⁾: "If I

(1) Beginning with I.L. SEELIGMANN, "Menschliches Heldentum und Göttliche Hilfe — Die doppelte Kausalität im alttestamentlichen Geschichtsdenken", *ThZ* 19 (1963) 385-411 (see especially p. 386, n. 1); Y. KAUFMANN, *The Book of Joshua* (Jerusalem 1987) 128.

(2) Y. AMIT, "Dual Causality — An Additional Aspect", *Bet Mikrah* 38 (1993) 44. This stance is different than the author's stance in a previous article, where she suggested that the dual causality principle reflects the world of beliefs and knowledge which had started forming in Judah from the end of the 8th century B.C., that is, reflects the deuteronomic school (Y. AMIT, "The Dual Causality Principle and its Effects on Biblical Literature", *VT* 37 [1987] 385-400).

(3) When David Gunn and Danna Fewell wanted to demonstrate the phenomenon where God operates secretly, they brought as example two stories: the story of Joseph in Egypt (Gen 37-50) and the story of Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam 15-20). D.M. GUNN — D.N. FEWELL, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford 1993) 81.

(4) About the narrator's identification with David throughout the story see W. CASPARI, "The Literary Type and Historical Value of 2 Sam 15-20", in: *Narrative and Novella in Samuel*. Studies by Hugo Gressmann and Other Scholars (ed. D.M. GUNN) (Sheffield 1991)

shall find favor in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me back and show me both it and his habitation: but if he thus says, I have no delight in thee; behold here I am, let him do to me as seems good in his eyes." (15,25-26). Fokkelman has noted nicely that these words of David are set in an ironic parallelism to the words of Absalom beforehand: "For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Aram, saying, if the LORD shall bring me back indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD." (15,8)⁽⁵⁾. Yet, it is possible that this parallelism is not designed only for the irony of it. The reader is required to project what is implied by David's words onto Absalom's words; that is, just as David interprets the events as God's will so is Absalom's going to Hebron for starting the rebellion the Will of God.

I want to trace one literary means that has been used by the narrator in order to develop the above-mentioned principle: the integration of ambiguous expressions into the story.

The utilization of ambiguous expressions within the biblical story, for the purpose of shaping it and emphasizing its intentions, has long been recognized⁽⁶⁾. There are various advantages to the utilization of an ambiguous expression within the text, among them the emphasis of dual causality. I refer to mainly syntactic obtuseness, where the reader finds it difficult to decide who the subject of the sentence is: the human character in the story, or God. The difficulty in itself creates the possibility that the reader is to see both as the syntactic 'subject'; that is, the one who sets the plot in motion. For example, when Naomi declares: "Blessed is he who has not abandoned his steadfast love to the living and to the dead" (Ru 2,20), it is not clear to whom Naomi is referring. Glueck, and others, claims that Boaz is the subject of the sentence⁽⁷⁾. Most scholars, however, see God as the subject of the sentence⁽⁸⁾, and there are some who suggest that this sentence holds a

70, n. 1. Regarding this issue see also E. WORTHWEIN, *Die Erzählung von der Thronfolge Davids — theologische oder politische Geschichtsschreibung?* (Theologische Studien 115; Zürich 1974).

⁽⁵⁾ J.P. FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Book of Samuel* (Assen 1981) I, 171.

⁽⁶⁾ See for example: E. KÖNIG, *Stilistik, Rhetorik, Poetik, in Bezug auf die Biblische Litteratur Komparativisch* (Leipzig 1900) 10-12; A. FRISCH, "Three Syntactical Discontinuities in I Regum 9-11", *ZAW* 115 (2003) 88-93; J. GROSSMAN, "The Use of Ambiguity in Biblical Narratives of Misleading and Deceit", *Tarbiz* 63 (2004) 483-515; Y. ZAKOVITCH, *'I Will Utter Riddles from Ancient Times'*. Riddles and Dream-riddles in Biblical Narrative (Tel-Aviv 2005) 88-172; J. GROSSMAN, *Ambiguity in the Biblical Narrative and its Contribution to the Literary Formation* (Ph.D. Thesis; Bar-Ilan University 2006) — and there a wide research survey: 6-21. And in a wider manner that relies on the process of reading: M. STERNBERG, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (Bloomington 1985).

⁽⁷⁾ N. GLUECK, *Hesed in the Bible* (Cincinnati 1967) 40-42; B. REBERA, "Yahweh or Boaz? Ruth 2:20 Reconsidered", *BT* 36 (1985) 317-327; F. BUSH, *Ruth/Esther* (WBC; Dallas, TX 1996) 135.

⁽⁸⁾ H.W. HERTZBERG, *Die Bücher Josua, Richter, Ruth* (ATD 9; Göttingen 1959) 270; W. RUDOLPH, *Das Buch Ruth, Das Hohe Lied, Die Klagelieder* (KAT 17; Leipzig 1962) 50; J. GRAY, *Joshua, Judges, and Ruth* (NCBC; Grand Rapids, MI 1967) 393; E.F. CAMPBELL, Jr., *Ruth*, (AB 7; Garden City, NY 1975) 106; K. SAKENFELD, *The Meaning of Hesed in the Hebrew Bible* (Missoula, MT 1978) 104-107.

deliberate ambiguity that contributes to the design of the message of the story: the narrator implies that it is both God and Boaz⁽⁹⁾.

In this paper, we shall examine how in the story of Absalom's rebellion, the narrator has used this literary device, the ambiguous expression, in order to encourage the reader to interpret the events as deriving from two sources: the human one and the Divine one.

I. "As if a man would inquire of the word of God" (16,23)

Between the two pieces of advice that Ahithophel had given Absalom there is a comment of the narrator expressing much appreciation of Ahithophel's advice: "And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counseled in those days, was as if a man would inquire of the word of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom" (16,23). This intervention of the narrator, especially here, serves two functions. On one hand, it clarifies why Absalom had accepted Ahithophel's advice to lie with David's mistresses (22). On the other hand, As Bar-Efrat and Fokkelman claim, it increases the tension towards the next scene, in which Ahithophel will counsel Absalom to pursue David immediately, while Hushai tries to prevent him from doing so (17,4-11)⁽¹⁰⁾.

The order in which the facts are given in the story has crucial significance for giving meaning to each fact⁽¹¹⁾. It is hard to exaggerate the importance of this matter and often, a slight change in the location of a linguistic expression gives it a totally new meaning⁽¹²⁾. In the story of Absalom's rebellion as well, the order in which the facts are given generates hidden meaning. For example, the fact that the narrator tells the reader about David's prayer — "O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness" (15,31) — just before he tells the reader about David meeting Hushai implies to the reader to decode the meaning of Hushai in the story as God granting David his request and already at this stage, the reader feels that Hushai is the one who will succeed in thwarting Ahithophel's counsel⁽¹³⁾. In Gunn's words: "As it transpires, Hushai is instrumental in thwarting Ahithophel and so may be seen as the answer to David's curse against the counselor in the immediately

⁽⁹⁾ M.J. BERNSTEIN, "Two Multivalent Readings in the Ruth Narrative", *JSOT* 50 (1991) 15-26, 16, n. 1; C.J. COLLINS, "Ambiguity and Theology in Ruth: Ruth 1:21 and 2:20", *Presbyterian* 19 (1993) 97-102.

⁽¹⁰⁾ S. BAR-EFRAT, *Narrative Art in the Bible* (JSOTSS 70; Sheffield 1992) 26; FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art in Samuel*, 205. And compare: CASPARI, "Literary Type", 73-74.

⁽¹¹⁾ M. PERRY, "Literary Dynamics: How the Order of a Text Creates Its Meaning", *Literature* 28 (1979) 6-46; M. STERNBERG, "The Truth vs. All the Truth: The Rendering of Inner Life in Biblical Narrative", *Literature* 29 (1979) 126-129.

⁽¹²⁾ See, for example: T. NOVICK, "'Almost, at Times, the Fool': Abimelekh and Genesis 20", *Prooftexts* 24 (2004) 277-290. This is true not only regarding the design of the small literary unit, but also the editing of a complete cycle of stories. See, for example: J. GROSSMAN, "Divine Command and Human Initiative: A Literary View on Numbers 25-31", *Biblical Interpretation* 15 (2007) 54-79.

⁽¹³⁾ FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art in Samuel*, 191; BAR-EFRAT, *Narrative Art*, 28.

preceding verse: 'O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness' (14).

The integration of the narrator's interjection and evaluation of Ahithophel's counsel, immediately after the first advice he had given Absalom, provides the narrator's comment with an additional layer of meaning⁽¹⁵⁾. Through the description of Absalom lying with David's mistresses, the narrator-editor presents the realization of Nathan's prophecy after David's sin with Bathsheba: "I will raise up evil against thee out of thy own house, and I will take thy wives before thy eyes and give them to thy neighbors and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun" (12,11-12). Indeed, in the description of Absalom, it is emphasized that the deed had been done before all Israel: "and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel" (16,22). As said, immediately after this description, the narrator intervenes and tells the reader that David and Absalom had appreciated Ahithophel's advice very much, "as if a man would inquire of the word of God". Besides the unconcealed reading of this advice, lies an additional, concealed one: Ahithophel's advice is like God's. More specifically: Ahithophel's advice to Absalom to lie with his father's mistresses should be understood as the realization of God's will as well, as a continuation of God's punishment of David:

"Ahithophel's advice unwittingly fulfills the threat of Nathan. Absalom's defiance and challenge to David may be an act of raw, daring politics; it is at the same time, however, the narrative makes clear, an implementation of Yahweh's decree given long before Absalom and Ahithophel are present in the narrative. The coup of Absalom, informed by the wisdom of Ahithophel, implements Yahweh's awesome judgment voiced by Nathan" (16).

The concealed meaning of the narrator's observation is even more emphasized if the *ketiv* version is adopted⁽¹⁷⁾. According to this version, which lacks the word "that person", the verse states that "The advice of

(14) D.M. GUNN, "From Jerusalem to the Jordan and Back: Symmetry in 2 Samuel XV-XX", VT 30 (1980) 111. Polzin feels this by comparing the narrator's comment later on: "For the LORD had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel" (17,14) and David's prayer: "O LORD I Pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel" (R. POLZIN, *David and the Deuteronomist: 2 Samuel* [Bloomington 1993] 176).

(15) The realization of an ambiguous expression in the text should be divided into several levels (GROSSMAN, *Ambiguity in the Biblical Narrative*, 112-113; 294-296). In our context, I want to emphasize that even if the main meaning of the discussed expression is clear to the reader, the accompanying hidden meaning is still important and even if it hasn't the same status of reading, it has a role in the process of reading and in decoding the meaning of the text.

(16) W. BRUEGGEMANN, *First and Second Samuel* (Interpretation; Louisville 1990) 310.

(17) The acceptable way among the various researchers and translations is to adopt the *qere*: "was like that of one who enquires of God" (NIV) and for example: NAU, JPS. There are those who claim that there is no difference between the two versions, (Like: D.K. BUDDÉ, *Die Bücher Samuel* [KHC 8; Tübingen 1902] 278), and it is possible that the justice is with them. However, it is possible that the meaning of the written version is that Ahithophel's counsel is compared to a situation where he is the one asking the advice of God.

Ahithophel, given to anyone who asks, was if he (Ahithophel, not the questioner) had asked the advice of God" (16,23). Ostensibly, Ahithophel has Divine inspiration and his advice — such as the advice he gave Absalom to lie with his father's mistresses, which is mentioned beforehand — is the word of God.

Polzin has suggested a completely opposite reading. In his opinion, the narrator emphasizes that David and Absalom address Ahithophel's counsel as if it were the advice of God in order to slight the point of view of the narrator himself, that he does not appreciate Ahithophel's counsel so much: "As a matter of equivalence, Ahithophel's counsel is certainly not equal to God's word" (18). Yet, the inner tension of the story rests on the assumption that if indeed Ahithophel's counsel is accepted, Absalom will overpower David. That is, Ahithophel's counsel is not criticized. On the contrary, as said above at least his first advice is the realization of Nathan's prophecy to David.

An additional advantage of this reading is related to the gap in the way Absalom reacts to the two counsels of Ahithophel. As said, the narrator's words appear between the two counsels — the one that had been accepted and the one that had been rejected by Hushai (19). It should be noticed that Ahithophel's first advice (to lie with David's mistresses) is also given after Hushai has already reached Absalom. Moreover, Absalom phrases his question in the plural: "Give counsel among you what we shall do" (verse 20). Fokkelman (as well as Segal), interpreted this use of the plural as directed towards Absalom's official council: "Absalom asks his national council for guidance and in so doing uses the plural, v. 20b, but he is speaking to Ahithophel (v. 20a) and the answer also comes from this character alone, v. 21a" (20). But, it can also be assumed that this specific use of the plural is directed towards Hushai, whom the reader has just finished reading about his arrival to Absalom (21), and the reader sees not only Ahithophel — to whom the question is directed — but also Hushai, who faces Absalom. The reader's expectation to hear Ahithophel's advice rejected by Hushai, since for that reason he had gone to Absalom is not met. Absalom does turn to Hushai (as he does regarding the second advice) and Hushai does not say a word. This in itself implies that even Hushai cannot overcome the first advice, which is actually divine even if Ahithophel is not aware of it, just as if a man would inquire of the word of God (22).

(18) POLZIN, *David and the Deuteronomist*, 173.

(19) In Hushai's rejection of Ahithophel's second counsel, an ambiguous expression is also used. Its role is to highlight the great mental stress of Hushai when he stands before Absalom. See: GROSSMAN, "The Use", 505-508.

(20) FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art in Samuel*, 209; M.Z. SEGAL, *The Books of Samuel* (Jerusalem 1987) 334.

(21) As claims M. GARSIEL, *Samuel* (The World of the Bible; Tel-Aviv 1993) 141. See also: A. SCHULZ, *Das zweite Buch Samuel* (EHAT 8/2, Münster 1920) 200; G. ROBINSON, *Let Us Be Like the Nations. A Commentary on the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel* (ITC; Grand Rapids 1993) 239.

(22) Compare: BAR-EFRAT, *Narrative Art*, 26-27; S. HALPERIN, "The Tragic Aspect of the Story of Absalom's Uprising", *Bar-Ilan Book* 18-19 (ed. M.Z. KADDARI — N. KATZBURG — D. SPERBER) (Ramat-Gan 1981) 307-313.

II. "Thou art in evil plight" (16,8)

Around Shimei's curse and David's reaction to it there are several ambiguous expressions and the literary sophistication is especially prominent here. When Shimei curses David he says: "the LORD has returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul whom thou hast usurped; and the LORD has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and behold, thou art in evil plight because thou art a bloody man" (16,8). What is the "evil plight" at which Shimei directs his words? The simple reading — in Bar-Efrat's words — is "David's bad state of affairs right now"⁽²³⁾. That is, his being forced to abandon his house and Jerusalem due to his son's rebellion. Most translations and interpretations have translated the verse in such a manner, for instance McCarter: "You're in this evil predicament"⁽²⁴⁾. This reading is supported by Nathan's prophecy, which had been said to David after the sin with Bathsheba: "I will raise up evil against thee out of thy own house" (12,11). Nathan had probably directed his words to the punishment David would receive in the future and indeed, now, the prophesized punishment is realized. Yet, there are those who translate the verse differently and actually raise the possibility of another reading of the verse. Alter, for example, has translated the verse in the following manner: "and here you are, because of your evil"⁽²⁵⁾. He interprets the case letter 'נ' to mean 'because' and suggests that the evil mentioned in Shimei's curse is not a punishment but a 'sin', which from Shimei's point of view is usurping the kingdom from Sha'ul.

This reading is also supported by Nathan's prophecy mentioned above. There it says: "Why hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight?" (12,9)⁽²⁶⁾. In Nathan's prophecy this is in intentional wordplay, one which emphasizes the principle of measure for measure⁽²⁷⁾:

The sin:	Its punishment:
To do evil in his sight	I will raise up evil against thee out of thy own house
And hast taken his wife to be thy wife	And I will take thy wives before thy eyes and give them to thy neighbor
And hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon	The sword shall never depart from thy house

Now, the point of view of the cursing Shimei combines with the words of Nathan. In his words as well, the reader tends to hear the 'evil' — the sin you had done, and parallel to it, the 'evil' — the punishment you have received.

⁽²³⁾ S. BAR-EFRAT, *II Samuel: Introduction and Commentary* (Mikra Leyisra'el; Jerusalem 1996) 173.

⁽²⁴⁾ McCARTER, *Samuel*, 362; A.A. ANDERSON, 2 *Samuel*, (WBC; Dallas, TX 1989) 199: "and here you are in your calamity"; FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art in Samuel*, 198: "there you are in your misfortune".

⁽²⁵⁾ R. ALTER, *The David Story*. A Translation with Commentary of 1 and 2 Samuel (New York 1999) 292.

⁽²⁶⁾ About the motif of 'evil' and its extensive use in the cycle of David's stories, see: F. POLAK, *Biblical Narrative Aspects of Art and Design* (Jerusalem 1999) 185.

⁽²⁷⁾ J. JACOBS, *Measure for Measure as Literary and Ideological Tool in the Biblical Storytelling* (Ph. D Thesis; Bar-Ilan University 2002), 227 (compare: FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art in Samuel*, 83-86).

Actually, the implied reading that Shimei's words allude to David's sin finds additional support from the account of the end of David's kingdom, from Solomon's words to Shimei: "And the king said to Shimei, Thou knowst all the evil which thy heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD shall return thy evil upon thy own head" (1 Kgs 2,44). The parallelism between Solomon's words to Shimei and Shimei's curse of David is quite obvious. Against Shimei's words: "the LORD has returned upon thee", Solomon says to Shimei: "the LORD shall return". Against Shimei's words: "thou art in evil plight", Solomon says: "thy evil upon thy own head"⁽²⁸⁾. Since in Solomon's words to Shimei, "thy evil" is meant to imply Shimei's sin (cursing the king), it seems that the justice is with Alter, and in Shimei's words, the "evil plight" should also be interpreted as 'your sin', the evil you have done.

Thus, the two available readings contain a concrete meaning that fits the context of the verse and both are supported by the texture of words of the wider cycle of stories. In my opinion, here as well lies an intentional ambiguous expression: David's evil plight at the present is a consequence of the evil he had done in the past⁽²⁹⁾. The double reading contributes to the design of the link between the sin and its punishment, even if Shimei had meant one sin (David usurping Saul's kingdom), while the reader, who hears Nathan's rebuke in the background, understands that David is being punished because of another sin (Bathsheba).

III. "For his cursing" (16,12)

David's reaction to Shimei's curse also contains an ambiguous expression whose function is to encourage the reader to pay attention to the dual causality that envelops David's history. In David's explanation of the fact that he refuses to kill Shimei (as Joab suggests) he says: "It may be that the LORD will look on my affliction and that the LORD will return me good for his cursing this day" (16,12).

On a first reading, it seems that the one who is cursing, referred to by the word 'his', is Shimei⁽³⁰⁾. Moreover, David creates in his words a remarkable contrast between his hope and Shimei's curse. Against Shimei's words — "the LORD has returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul" (2 Sam 16,8), David says — "the LORD will return me good for his cursing"⁽³¹⁾.

Yet, according to the syntactic structure of the sentence, God can also be

⁽²⁸⁾ Compare: S.J. DeVRIES, *1 Kings* (WBC; Waco, TX 1985) 36; FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art in Samuel*, 389, 408; ALTER, *David Story*, 376; JACOBS, *Measure for Measure*, 69-71.

⁽²⁹⁾ And as Kil says: "two evils are implied - that which you have done and that which has come upon you" (Y. KIL, *Samuel*, [Da'at Mikra; Jerusalem 1981] 459). And as Segal has implied: "the evil you have brought upon yourself by your evil deeds" (SEGAL, *Samuel*, 333).

⁽³⁰⁾ So are most of the translations. Anderson has gone even further and added Shimei explicitly into his translation (*Samuel*, 200).

⁽³¹⁾ BAR-EFRAT, *Samuel*, 173. And compare with FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art in Samuel*, 200.

seen as the referent of 'his cursing', since God is the one who is mentioned beforehand (the Lord will look / the Lord will return), and Shimei, on the other hand, is not mentioned at all in the verse. In other words, David's words can also be interpreted as a request that the Lord will return him good, instead of the curse that he (the Lord) had cursed him with⁽³²⁾. At first sight, such a reading is indeed surprising⁽³³⁾, but, actually, it is the heart of David's claim throughout his speech to Joab: "And the king said: What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because the LORD had said to him, Curse David. Who shall then say: Why hast thou done so? ... Let him alone and let him curse; for the LORD has bidden him." (10-11). David deciphers Shimei's curse as God's curse and he emphasizes that he sees in Shimei a sort of Divine messenger, to point at his punishment in his son's rebellion. And, as Robinson wrote: "It was believed in Israel that Yahweh was the source of all authentic cursing and blessing. Once the words of cursing or blessing had proceeded from the mouth of the person appointed by God, those words could never be recalled"⁽³⁴⁾.

In any case, the double subject in David's words — "for his cursing" — matches the message David wants to convey to Joab and all his other servants. Shimei is indeed cursing because of the rivalry between the tribe of Benjamin (the tribe of Saul) and David; however, on a higher level, Shimei's curse of David integrates into the total Divine course.

The suggested double reading fits into another ambiguous expression that is hidden in David's words. I mean the subject that is implied in verse 10: "And the king said, what have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because the Lord had said to him, curse David. Who shall then say, wherefore hast thou done so?" Does "thou" refer to the cursing Shimei or maybe to God who had "told" Shimei to curse⁽³⁵⁾? Here also, the two readings are supported by the context of the sentence and it seems that the narrator wants us to adopt both readings together. David emphasizes that Shimei's deed cannot be doubted ("Wherefore hast thou done so — Shimei"), precisely because it is the hidden deed of God ("Wherefore hast thou done so — God!").

Occasionally, there is a tendency to believe that when a sentence is capable of being read with several differing meanings, it is an expression of composition that is unfocused, almost lazy; while writing that clearly

⁽³²⁾ There are some who try to by-pass the problem and do not refer at all to the cursing person: "in place of the course laid on me this day" (P.R. ACKROYD, *The Second Book of Samuel* [CBC; Cambridge 1977] 150), or "and repay me with good for this cursing of me today" (POLZIN, *David and the Deuteronomist*, 161).

⁽³³⁾ Especially in light of the fact that God cannot be found cursing a human being in the Bible. It should be noted that here as well, I raise this as a reading which is secondary to the main reading according to which Shimei is the cursing person implied by this expression.

⁽³⁴⁾ ROBINSON, *Let Us Be*, 237. See also POLAK, *Biblical Narrative*, 297; Z. ADAR, *The Biblical Narrative* (Jerusalem 1959), 127. The design of the inference from minor to major which David does is especially emphasized in the verse because of the lack of reference to people by their names so that "my son" (בני) stands against "this Benjaminite" (בן הַבִּינְיָמִי) (FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art in Samuel*, 200).

⁽³⁵⁾ See about this question: KIL, *Samuel*, 459; BAR-EFRAT, *Samuel*, 174.

expresses one meaning only is to be preferred⁽³⁶⁾. However, the usage of ambiguous expressions has clearly been adopted by various writers as part of the literary means by which they compose their literary creations⁽³⁷⁾. These usages allow for the expression of subtle irony, layered messages, or other literary and narrative goals. In this article, we have suggested that the through the repeated use of this narrative tool, the syntactic obtuseness where the subject can be understood as either the human character or God, serves a literary-theological purpose — the emphasis of the principle of dual-causality. This goal is achieved through the usage of ambiguous expressions, careful reading that is influenced by the order in which literary details are placed within the narrative, and dual readings with intertextual connotations.

Essentially, the reader identifies the story of Absalom's rebellion as part of the divine response to David's behaviour in the first reading, through its inclusion in the series of narratives that immediately follow David's offence and Nathan's prophecy of punishment. The double layers that we have described in this paper, and through the use of the literary means described above, come to strengthen this approach, as opposed to providing an alternative reading.

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SUMMARY

The principle of dual causality, according to which the same event is projected twice for two different reasons — Divine and human — is known among scholars and researchers of the Bible. One of the outstanding narratives in which this principle becomes evident to the reader is Absalom's rebellion: the narrator tells the story in terms of political conflict, but hints of a deeper explanation, which sees the rebellion as a Divine punishment for David. This paper portrays how ambiguous expressions were employed in order to form the principle of dual causality in this narrative.

⁽³⁶⁾ It stands to follow, therefore, that ambiguity is to be avoided at all costs. See, for example, A. WAJSBERG, "Graphic Representation of Syntactical Ambiguity", *Leshonenu la'am* 45 (1994) 93-97. Similarly, L. Charlap holds that the reader's function is to establish a unified reading wherever possible, and provides several approaches for resolving ambiguities ("On Some Types of Ambiguity in the Biblical Text: A Textual-Semantic Aspect Seen through the Exegesis of Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra", *Hebrew Linguistics* 45 [1999] 37-52). Clearly, our approach differs in that it recognizes that in various circumstances, the ambiguous reading is preferred.

⁽³⁷⁾ See, for examples, Empson's classic study: *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (New York 1953).

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

Joachim VETTE, *Samuel und Saul*. Ein Beitrag zur narrativen Poetik des Samuelbuches (Beiträge zum Verstehen der Bible 13). Münster, LIT Verlag, 2005. ix-251 p. 16 × 23,5.

La publication de cette thèse soutenue à l'Université de Heidelberg sous la direction de M. Oeming est un fruit de l'intérêt que la poétique narrative suscite depuis peu dans le monde germanique. Que cet intérêt soit récent explique sans doute que l'auteur, avant de développer sa lecture de 1 S 8–12, consacre une première partie à la présentation de quelques éléments importants de la méthode telle que M. Sternberg et d'autres l'ont adaptée à l'étude de l'Ancien Testament (le narrateur, les personnages, la temporalité et la structure de l'intrigue, le lecteur). Le souci de préciser au mieux la terminologie et d'explicitier les présupposés méthodologiques est partout présent. Ensuite, dans un rapide *status quæstionis* concernant les études récentes sur 1 S 8–12, Vette met en évidence l'ignorance mutuelle des approches narrative et historico-critique. Il situe dès lors son étude comme une tentative de faire dialoguer les deux méthodes et de comprendre l'intention du texte dans sa forme actuelle. Il s'engage ensuite dans une étude narrative du texte, section par section, en commençant chaque fois par un regard rapide sur la structure de l'intrigue, structure qu'il suit pas à pas pour explorer le récit.

L'interprétation est originale. Parce que Samuel finit comme le prêtre Éli (8,1-4), la demande de roi que les anciens lui adressent est fondée. Le prophète-juge doit donc céder sa place à un roi que Dieu lui demande d'installer dans sa charge, bien qu'il estime que la requête du peuple constitue une rébellion. Mais Samuel fait de l'obstruction, refusant d'exécuter l'ordre de YHWH: donner un roi, qui sera en réalité un juge sauveur comme Samuel l'a été (cf. 1 S 7). Les réticences de celui-ci sont fortes: il fait tout pour imposer son influence à celui qui lui est envoyé pour être oint comme *nagîd* (9,1–10,16) et il présente au peuple le nouveau roi comme un châtiment de son péché (10,17-21). Mais YHWH impose Saül qui accomplit ce qu'il attend de lui (10,22–11,13). Le roi confirme ainsi l'autorité divine sur le peuple, l'empêchant du même coup de devenir «comme toutes les nations» comme il le voulait (8,5.20). Après la victoire de Saül, YHWH, le peuple et le roi sont unis, tandis que Samuel a perdu tout pouvoir. C'est alors qu'il récupère son autorité (11,14–12,25): au moyen d'une habile stratégie rhétorique, il sépare Dieu du peuple dont il avait satisfait la demande et se pose en représentant officiel de YHWH, dénonçant la rébellion du peuple; il finit par s'imposer

comme médiateur au détriment de Saül, qui se retrouve dès lors dans la position d'un simple figurant.

Une telle interprétation se fonde sur la distinction des voix narratives au sein du récit. Vette préfère cette distinction à l'opposition un peu trop simple entre perspectives pro- et anti-monarchistes proposées par l'exégèse historique. En réalité, tous les passages critiques vis-à-vis de la royauté sont liés à la présence active de Samuel. Pour le reste, le roi est présenté positivement. Car même si, au départ, le peuple et YHWH ne sont pas d'accord sur le modèle de leader qui convient, ils finissent par se rejoindre quand Dieu aide les Israélites à trouver Saül. Dans ce cadre, Samuel n'est pas le porte-parole du narrateur (ou de l'auteur qui se cache derrière lui); c'est une figure construite qui interagit avec les autres personnages, y compris YHWH, dont il n'est pas le représentant fidèle. De plus, ce qui apparaît — légitimement sans doute — aux yeux des critiques historiques comme des répétitions reflétant diverses traditions (les trois installations de Saül) n'empêche pas une lecture suivie du récit. Il constitue en effet une séquence narrative d'une belle cohérence; seuls quelques éléments font tache, comme le premier investissement de Saül par l'esprit divin, événement resté sans suite (10,9), ou encore la théophanie d'orage en 12,18, par laquelle YHWH semble confirmer les prétentions de Samuel, alors que leurs positions s'avèrent discordantes tout au long du récit.

Vette plaide donc pour un dialogue constructif entre exégètes historico-critiques et praticiens de la poétique narrative. Force est pourtant de reconnaître que le dialogue qu'il engage concrètement reste assez limité. Il se ramène à l'une ou l'autre remarque (comme par ex. l'unité du chapitre 8 et la présence du discours anti-monarchiste de Samuel) et au constat final que, tout en utilisant une méthode fort différente, l'étude narrative aboutit à une conclusion qui n'est pas sans point commun avec celle de P. Mommer, *Samuel. Geschichte und Überlieferung* (WMANT 65; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1991) à propos de l'opposition entre Saül et Samuel, ce dernier n'étant pas le fondateur de la monarchie en Israël. Sur ce point, le lecteur reste sur sa faim, même si les bases décrites par Vette pour un dialogue fécond entre méthodes sont saines (225-227).

La lecture de 1 S 8-12 est à la fois précise et intéressante, même si elle recourt de façon trop peu explicite aux outils exposés dans la première partie. C'est un bel exercice que Vette présente. Il ne se montre pas seulement soucieux de rendre le lecteur attentif à la poétique du récit et à l'élaboration de sa problématique et de ses personnages. Il propose encore une interprétation qu'il construit à mesure qu'il progresse dans la découverte du récit. On regrettera peut-être qu'il néglige certaines aspérités du texte, s'en tenant à la compréhension courante sans vraiment la discuter. Ainsi, par ex., en 8,7a, le début de la réponse de YHWH à la prière de Samuel est «écoute la voix du peuple *en tout ce qu'ils te disent*». La clausule finale *לכל אשר יאמרו אליך* pose question, car YHWH semble y donner son aval pour qu'Israël devienne une nation comme les autres, ce qu'il va pourtant contester sans tarder. Aussi, est-il permis de se demander s'il n'ordonne pas plutôt à Samuel d'écouter *tout* ce que les anciens disent (Yiqtol de durée). En effet, à en juger par ce que le narrateur suggère au v. 6a, Samuel n'entend pas la fin de la parole des anciens («comme toutes les nations»), heurté qu'il est par

leur volonté de le remplacer («pour nous juger»). Or, faute d'enregistrer les derniers mots des anciens, il ne comprend pas que leur requête constitue d'abord une rébellion contre YHWH. Aussi ce dernier attire-t-il son attention sur ce point crucial pour l'amener à sortir de sa perspective étroite (8,7b).

La fin du même discours de YHWH est tout aussi ambiguë. L'expression de l'ordre (הַעֲדָה תֵּעִיד בָּהֶם וְהִגַּדְתָּ לָהֶם מִשְׁפָּט הַמֶּלֶךְ) peut en effet prendre différents sens. Vette le repère d'ailleurs: selon lui (116-118), Dieu demande à Samuel d'exposer les droits et devoirs du roi qu'il accepte de donner. Mais Samuel entend autrement et, avertissant le peuple solennellement (עֵד Hifil), il lui décrit le comportement ordinaire (מִשְׁפָּט) qu'il prétend être celui d'un roi. Ce n'est là qu'un des sens possibles de l'ordre de Dieu, celui que Samuel entend en fonction de son sentiment d'être écarté et de son désir de dissuader le peuple. Mais la même phrase peut être entendue avec T. Veijola, «Zu Ableitung und Bedeutung von *hē'îd* I im Hebräischen», *UF* 8 (1976) 343-351, «tu dois énoncer les stipulations parmi eux et leur communiquer le droit du roi» (un sens qui, selon Vette, reflète l'intention de Dieu). Mais, vu le sens judiciaire fréquent du syntagme הַעֲדָה et du terme מִשְׁפָּט, il est encore possible de comprendre comme ceci: «tu dois témoigner contre eux et leur communiquer le jugement du roi...».

Sur cette base, on peut questionner la lecture de Vette sur le caractère persistant de la divergence d'opinion entre Samuel et YHWH. En effet, après que Samuel a averti le peuple du péril que représente le comportement courant d'un roi —selon un sens possible des instructions reçues—, dans l'espoir de le détourner de son projet contrairement à l'ordre exprès de YHWH, il se trouve ensuite dans deux situations où il exécutera tout ce que Dieu lui a demandé, selon les deux autres sens. Après l'onction de Saül et avant le tirage au sort, il procède à un *jugement* conforme à ce que YHWH lui a dit: il dénonce le désir idolâtre par lequel Israël rejette son Dieu (10,18-19a). Puis une fois Saül désigné comme le choisi de YHWH, Samuel proclame la *constitution royale* (מִשְׁפָּט הַמֶּלֶכָה), un élément repéré également par Vette (10,25a). Plus loin, il «renouvelle» la royauté après que la victoire de Saül a réduit les contestataires au silence (10,27-11,15), et déclare que, comme YHWH le lui a demandé, il a entendu la voix du peuple (12,1). Puis il invoque contre le peuple un double témoignage (12,5: עֵד ב) avant de procéder à nouveau à un jugement du peuple (12,7: שֹׁפֵט) qui a rejeté son roi divin en demandant un monarque, et d'intégrer celui-ci dans l'ordre de l'alliance en en rappelant clairement les *stipulations* (12,13-15). Enfin, il adresse un nouvel *avertissement* du peuple invité à la fidélité (12,20-25). Dans tous ces passages, les reprises du discours de YHWH en 8,7-9 sont claires et nombreuses.

Si Samuel montre ainsi une fidélité constante à la première parole reçue de YHWH après l'avoir d'abord interprétée dans un sens restrictif et déformant, n'est-ce pas le signe qu'une fois passé le choc initial, il rejoint le désir divin de donner au peuple un roi, mais dans le cadre de l'alliance et donc sous le contrôle d'un homme de Dieu, en l'occurrence Samuel (ce qui se prolonge tout au long de la période royale)? En ce sens, on comprend — à la différence de Vette qui ne peut intégrer ces éléments — pourquoi YHWH confirme par son esprit l'onction de Saül (10,10) et pourquoi il donne raison à son prophète devant le peuple en déclenchant un orage, le soutenant ainsi

dans l'instauration d'une monarchie sous contrôle et dans l'incrimination du peuple, tout comme il l'avait fait avec Moïse pour l'accréditer devant Pharaon qui finit par avouer son péché (Ex 9,23.27.34 // 1 S 12,18-19). Certes, sans doute influencé par le rejet dont il est l'objet, Samuel emploie la manière forte avec Israël. Mais est-ce suffisant pour affirmer qu'il n'est pas en phase avec YHWH, et ce, dès l'assemblée de Micpa (10,17)?

Par ailleurs, la lecture proposée pourrait être davantage problématisée. En effet, outre qu'il élude parfois des passages difficiles sans discuter leurs aspérités (par ex. 9,24), Vette ne traite pas certaines questions importantes: pourquoi YHWH choisit-il comme roi un homme aussi hésitant que Saül? Pourquoi fixe-t-il à Saül la mission de libérer des Philistins (9,16) alors que ceux-ci ne constituent plus un danger depuis 7,13? Pourquoi donne-t-il à Samuel des informations qui lui assurent une supériorité sur Saül et lui permettent de préparer l'accueil (9,15-17)? Pourquoi les signes annoncés se produisent-ils (10,2-10)? Un examen de ces questions aurait renforcé et nuancé la démonstration; il aurait peut-être aussi permis d'aller plus loin dans le dialogue avec la méthode historico-critique. Dans la composition très soignée du texte, on déplorera que trop de citations hébraïques intégrées dans le texte présentent de malencontreuses inversions de mots.

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Jesús LUZARRAGA, *Cantar de los Cantares*. Sendas del amor (Nueva Biblia Española. Poesía). Estella, Editorial Verbo Divino, 2005. 650-5* p. 15 x 24.

Questo commentario di Luzarraga, ordinario di esegesi e di teologia biblica al *Biblicum* di Roma, si inserisce con originalità nel dibattito sul senso e sulle interpretazioni del Cantico dei Cantici di questi ultimi anni. Dopo una breve presentazione L. inizia con la traduzione del testo in cui sono segnalate le varie unità e indicati in margine i pronomi di chi prende la parola: sempre e solo «lei» o «lui». Segue una lunga introduzione di 110 pagine in cui vengono trattati in modo molto approfondito dieci argomenti. Innanzitutto sono presentati il testo ebraico e le sue versioni antiche. L'autenticità del testo consonantico tradizionale del Ct è giudicata confermata dai manoscritti di Qumran, come pure avallata essenzialmente dalle sue Versioni antiche (la LXX poche volte suppone un testo di base diverso). Quello che distingue il Ct chiaramente dalla prosa pura è la limpidezza delle sue frasi. La mescolanza dei ritmi fa sì che si possa classificarlo come «prosa ritmica», poiché il parallelismo tipico della versificazione ebraica non è molto forte in esso. A livello filologico il Ct si trova tra l'ebraico classico e quello mishnaico. Le sue caratteristiche testuali sconsigliano di allontanarsi dal testo tradizionale ben fissato.

L. si sofferma quindi sul motivo della presenza del Ct nel canone che non è il suo autore, Salomone, né la sua interpretazione allegorica che sarebbe ini-

ziata solo verso la metà del I sec. d.C., dopo l'occupazione romana, per contrastare l'ellenismo. La ragione per la presenza del Ct nel canone è il suo senso sapienziale. Il problema però è quello di determinare quale sia la sapienza che emerge nel Ct. Per L. è la sapienza che risalta dalla lettera: quella propria di un poema erotico, che manifesta il suo messaggio nella dinamica del testo. I primi lettori del Ct scoprivano nei poemi lirici un messaggio sopra l'amore umano e questa coscienza avrebbe determinato la sua presenza nel Canone. L. però non si sofferma a esaminare chi fossero in realtà questi primi lettori.

Il terzo argomento trattato è la storia dell'interpretazione, che si può dividere in tre momenti: l'interpretazione allegorica ebraica, quella cristiana pure allegorica, e quella moderna. Quello che ha contribuito a dare novità all'esegesi moderna del Ct è stato l'apporto delle religioni comparate; però questo ha creato anche un problema di parallelomania. Secondo L. non c'è nulla nel Ct che possa evidenziare una dipendenza da un'altra letteratura. Il Ct canta l'amore in modo tipico che non ha paralleli esatti con altre letterature. Quindi a livello letterario, salvo prova evidente in contrario, il Ct è un'opera ebraica, che deve essere interpretata dentro un contesto nel quale fu scritta. E a livello religioso il suo insegnamento deve essere compreso dentro la fede del popolo ebraico e cristiano.

Trovo didatticamente molto utile la presentazione degli indirizzi moderni nell'interpretazione del Ct mediante la segnalazione di ben trentatre scuole diverse. Dopo l'analisi delle differenti interpretazioni l'autore si pone una domanda: Che cosa è il Ct e quale è la sua natura? Per rispondere adeguatamente a questa domanda, che influisce nella esegesi, secondo L. bisogna tener conto di quali siano i suoi personaggi e di come sono presentati. I protagonisti del Ct appaiono nel senso fondamentale di sposo e sposa, non come semplici fidanzati. Non si parla del padre. La madre di ambedue riveste il simbolismo di colei che favorisce l'unione. I gruppi non hanno una esistenza reale. Sono figure estranee alla trama e mere creazioni poetiche per fare risaltare il messaggio.

Riguardo allo stile, il Ct vuole essere un poema che presenta una serie di incontri tra amanti, delineando alcuni sentieri dell'amore. L'arte nella combinazioni delle immagini è ciò che fa del Ct un grande poema. L'abbondanza delle immagini impiegate dal poeta fa sì che lo stile del Ct sia poetico e di conio metaforico. La metafora sostituisce la realtà e la rende enigmatica, per questo essa esige una decodificazione.

L. presenta quindi alcune chiavi di interpretazione, che possono chiarire il messaggio. L'aspetto filologico ha certamente un'importanza ovvia trattandosi di un'opera in ebraico antico, ma soprattutto l'ha l'aspetto letterario: il vero problema nell'interpretazione del Ct sta nell'arte di esplicitare e interpretare le metafore. Secondo L. per poter interpretare correttamente un'opera poetica, bisogna essere «persona poetica», che sappia distinguere il letterale e il simbolico. La terza chiave interpretativa è quella erotica. L'aspetto erotico rappresenta il fattore più importante, perché il Ct è un poema amoroso, che in alcune occasioni si tinge di magia. La quarta chiave interpretativa è il contesto biblico costituito dall'Antico Testamento, anche se per l'autore è esagerato dire che il Ct si può considerare come un'antologia di tradizioni bibliche. Di queste quattro chiavi mi sembra che L. nel suo commentario abbia usato soprattutto le prime tre, e in modo magistrale quella filologica.

Nonostante le difficoltà L. indica poi dei criteri che aiutino obiettivamente a individuare la data di composizione del Ct. Sono di due tipi: interni (soprattutto quello filologico) ed esterni (ambiente caratterizzato da un certo benessere sociale e un tempo sufficientemente anteriore al 150 a.C. nel quale il Ct avrebbe conquistato pieno riconoscimento canonico). Tutti questi elementi suggeriscono il tempo dei Lagidi nel III sec. a.C. verso il 250, in un momento previo all'attiva ellenizzazione della Palestina. Il luogo di composizione dai dati interni al Ct sembra essere la Palestina.

Per quanto riguarda l'autore del Ct, secondo L. l'uniformità di stile suggerisce una stessa mano. Questo non esclude che si possa parlare di un intreccio di poemi diversi, sulla cui preistoria si può anche dissertare. L'autore del Ct comunque si manifesta un grande poeta, in grado di padroneggiare un'arte letteraria propria di una élite culturale. Riguardo invece alla struttura del Ct, L. è convinto che non si possa parlare di struttura fissa, né di sviluppo omogeneo, né di dinamismo uniforme, ma solo di unità di tema e di stile.

Egli opta per una divisione del Ct in quindici unità, senza contare il titolo (1,1) che si possono raggruppare in sette poemi dentro il libro diviso in due parti (1,2-5,1; 5,2-8,14): le unità sono accompagnate da titoli: primi amori (1,2-2,7); incontro sorprendente (2,8-17); nuovo incontro preteso (3,1-5); ricordando le nozze (3,6-11); contemplazione estatica (4,1-7); viaggio degli sposi (4,8-5,1); desiderio passionale (5,2-6,3); bellezza confermata (6,4-12); cattività amorosa (7,1-11); frutti dell'amore (7,12-14); ansie amorose (8,1-4); anelli colmati (8,5-7); provocando la donazione (8,8-10); donazione totale (8,11-12); dichiarazioni d'amore eterno (8,13-14). Ognuna di questi poemi è poi suscettibile di ulteriori suddivisioni.

Il decimo e l'ultimo tema trattato nell'introduzione è quello che viene chiamato «argomento dinamico» del Ct, che giustifica le divisioni proposte. Anche se i dettagli che collegano i diversi elementi appariranno nel corso del commentario, L. per motivi didattici presenta una utile sintesi dei contenuti dei quindici poemi presenti nel Ct, facendo notare una progressione nella loro concatenazione.

Dopo queste premesse forse ci si spetterebbe che nel commentario che segue, L. tenesse conto della struttura annunciata, invece egli preferisce commentare tutto il libro, versetto per versetto, dall'inizio alla fine. Non viene segnalato nemmeno lo stacco dalla prima alla seconda parte in 5,1. In questo modo si ha il vantaggio di poter sviscerare fino nei minimi particolari il senso del testo, mi sembra però che si corra il rischio, denunciato dallo stesso autore nell'introduzione, di una lettura atomistica del Ct, che potrebbe impedire di captare tutta la ricchezza.

Il Ct viene letto da L. in dialogo costante con le migliori osservazioni fatte dagli esegeti antichi (soprattutto quelle di Teodoreto) e moderni, che sono regolarmente citati. Impressiona la quantità degli autori moderni richiamati nel commento. Le osservazioni filologiche sono approfondite in lunghi *excursus* in caratteri più piccoli: per esempio al termine *šōšannâ*, tradotto «amapola» e non «loto», vengono dedicate cinque pagine e alla «casa del vino» (*bêt hayyāyn*), tre pagine. Molte volte l'autore propone una traduzione del testo che si discosta da quelle comunemente note. Interessante, per esempio, la traduzione di Ct 6,12, un testo tradizionalmente considerato difficile o intraducibile: «¡No supe! Mi alma me colocó carroza de Ammi-Nadib», dove l'amata

esprime il desiderio di essere la cavalcatura del suo amato. Nei casi dubbi l'autore preferisce per quanto è possibile non sminuire la profondità dell'originale, anche se cambiando il testo ebraico alla luce delle traduzioni antiche il testo acquisterebbe più chiarezza.

Con delicata sensibilità poetica L. riesce a decodificare le tantissime metafore del Ct, chiarificandole nelle loro allusioni alla dimensione erotica, al momento dell'unione sessuale della coppia, della consumazione piena dell'unione. Per esempio le «montagne di Beter» (2,17), suggeriscono la genitalità femminile aperta: quello che in altre culture rappresenta «la montagna di Venere». Una caratteristica sessuale è contenuta pure nel termine «Beter», «montagne spaccate»: espressione fortemente erotica che metaforizza il luogo di incontro personale tra i due amanti. La «casa di mia madre» (8,2) simbolizza le parti intime della donna, aperta alla vita. Anche l'ultima volontà della kalà — così nel commentario viene chiamata la donna del Ct — è un invito all'unione sponsale: sta chiedendo ancora una volta un gesto erotico come ha fatto le altre volte (8,14). Non esistono nel Ct figure reali distinte dagli amanti, le altre figure sono meramente metaforiche come i compagni dello sposo nel giardino (8,13). L. conclude il suo commentario con un epilogo di una sola pagina, in cui si richiamano le caratteristiche dell'amore nuziale cantato nel Ct. Segue una abbondantissima bibliografia e il testo ebraico.

Giunti al termine della lettura di questo minuzioso e raffinato commentario, mi sembra si possa dire che L. dopo aver illustrato ben trentatre diverse tendenze interpretative del Ct abbia onestamente chiarito la cornice entro la quale egli stesso intende interpretare il Ct come ha suggerito recentemente J.E. De Ena (*Sens et interprétations du Cantique des Cantiques* [LD 194; Paris 2004] 403-407). Egli ricerca il senso del testo situandosi nel medesimo senso direzionale moderno di una ricerca esclusiva — o per lo meno prioritaria — del senso testuale originario all'interno della «cornice testuale» della lingua metaforica della poesia ebraica: il Ct è un libro poetico il cui tema centrale è l'amore e che indica i sentieri dell'amore, presentati soprattutto nella dinamica relazionale. Certo, non sempre è facile sottrarsi al rischio di interpretare le metafore partendo dal nostro attuale contesto culturale, considerando come senso letterale quello che è «ovvio per me» a prima vista. Per esempio in 7,1 nella contemplazione della kalà L. vede una reminiscenza di uno *striptease*. Inoltre secondo L. il Ct è stato introdotto nel «corpus» biblico per il suo carattere sapienziale. Si può pensare quindi che questa cornice allargata ne modifichi anche la sua orientazione — non il senso testuale — ma il suo senso direzionale entro il quale esso sarà ormai letto. Ci si poteva quindi aspettare che fosse più sviluppata una riflessione sui grandi eventi umani: l'amore — non solo quello sessuale —, la vita e la morte. Per L. un'ulteriore chiave interpretativa è costituita dal contesto biblico dell'Antico Testamento. Questa è un'altra «cornice» ancora più larga che modifica più profondamente il senso direzionale nel quale il Ct dovrebbe essere letto. Non mi sembra però che nel commentario si sia fatta una ricerca approfondita in questa direzione che avrebbe potuto collegare il Ct alla drammaticità dei capitoli II e III della Genesi, che mettono una solidarietà stretta tra amore divino e amore umano (cf. A.-M. Pelletier, «Le Cantique des Cantiques. Un texte et ses lectures», *Les Nouvelles voies de l'exégèse. En lisant le Cantique des cantiques*. XIX^e congrès de l'A.C.F.E.B. [éd. J. Nieuviarts – P. Debergé] [LD 190; Paris 2002] 75-

101, esp. 99). Per L. l'amore umano è un riflesso dell'amore di Dio e per questo secondo lui è inesatto qualificare il Ct come un libro non teologico, ma questo collegamento dell'amore umano con Dio non mi sembra molto sottolineato nel commento. Vi è un accenno molto discreto nel commento a 8,6: «La connessione del vero amore con Dio, come "fiamma divina" è la ragione ultima della sua invincibilità». E anche il contesto di fede del popolo di Dio nel commentario mi sembra più supposto che esplicitato.

Nonostante queste osservazioni, penso che il lavoro di Luzarraga per la sua completezza, l'attenzione al dettaglio, la fine analisi poetica, la profondità di discussione e la conoscenza di tutta la letteratura recente, costituisca un commentario imprescindibile per ogni studioso negli anni a venire.

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Novum Testamentum

Dagmar J. PAUL, *«Untypische» Texte im Matthäusevangelium?*
Studien zu Charakter, Funktion und Bedeutung des matthäischen Sonderguts (NTAbh NF 50), Münster, Aschendorff Verlag, 2005, VIII-364 p. 15,5 × 23. 49€.

Version aménagée d'une thèse soutenue à Dresde en 2004 (Directeur de recherche: T. Schmeller), la monographie de D.J. Paul se propose d'étudier un groupe de passages inhabituels propres à Matthieu, en les considérant comme un ensemble spécifique. L'objectif est d'en dégager les caractéristiques, la fonction et la portée dans le cadre général de l'histoire de Jésus brossée par le premier évangile. Les passages retenus sont rangés sous trois rubriques: le gros contingent des péripécies narratives de l'évangile de l'enfance (1,18-25; 2,1-12.13-15 + 19-23. 16-18); un segment narratif (14,18-31) et une péripécie (17,24-27) concernant Pierre; sept insertions localisées dans les récits de la Passion et de la Résurrection (27,3-10.19.24-25.51-53), dont les trois concernant la garde au tombeau (27,62-66; 28,2-4.11-15).

Paul procède en trois étapes. La première partie de son livre (16-121) est consacrée à une étude, que nous qualifierons de classique, des différents passages. Au cœur de l'ouvrage, la seconde partie (122-233) en constitue l'élément le plus original. Elle est articulée en deux sections. Dans la première (122-179), Paul réexamine, d'une façon synthétique, dans le cadre plus large de la littérature tant gréco-romaine que biblique et post-biblique du temps, l'usage matthéen des principaux motifs typiques rencontrés dans les passages précédemment sélectionnés (songes, phénomènes cosmiques, enfant pourchassé et sauvé, mort ignominieuse de l'impie...); une attention toute

particulière est accordée à l'analyse du motif du rêve (123-141) que Matthieu actualise à six reprises (1,20; 2,12.13.19.22; 27,19), en employant l'expression marquée κατ' ὄναρ, qui lui est propre dans tout le corpus biblique. Dans la seconde section de cette deuxième partie, Paul se penche ensuite sur les développements de ces motifs typiques du *Sondergut* matthéen dans les évangiles apocryphes de l'enfance (182-201); dans les traditions apocryphes sur Pierre (202-205) et dans les écrits apocryphes sur la Passion et la Résurrection (205-222). Après cette longue enquête menée à travers la littérature païenne et juive du temps, ainsi que parmi les apocryphes chrétiens, dans la troisième et dernière partie de sa monographie, Paul revient à Matthieu et se propose de préciser la place tenue dans le cadre de celui-ci par les passages qu'elle a sélectionnés. Tant au plan narratif (localisation dans la structure d'ensemble de Matthieu, incidence sur les réseaux conflictuels traversant l'histoire matthéenne de Jésus, répercussion sur le jeu complété des personnages [234-279]) qu'au plan théologique (fonction des citations d'accomplissement, retombées christologiques, implications ecclésiologiques et perception affinée de la condition de disciple à travers les portraits contrastés de Pierre et de Judas [288-323]).

Au terme de son enquête, Paul arrive aux conclusions suivantes. Au plan de leur caractérisation, le groupe de textes examinés présentent la particularité de posséder des traits inhabituels provenant en particulier de l'exploitation des différents motifs passés en revue dans la deuxième partie du travail; ainsi, le caractère unique de la personne de Jésus y apparaît sous le trait de représentations populaires alors universellement répandues. Le groupe de textes matthéens possède en outre l'originalité d'être proche des apocryphes qui donnent l'impression de les développer et de les amplifier. Le terme n'est certes pas dépourvu d'ambiguïté (18-23); mais le groupe de textes examinés se caractérise enfin par ses affinités avec les récits légendaires, où, à côté des motivations «biographiques» et théologiques, transparaît «le plaisir de raconter» (327).

Même si les textes narratifs du *Sondergut* matthéen examinés ne développent aucune ligne narrative et théologique propre, ils n'en affectent pas moins la conception d'ensemble de l'histoire matthéenne de Jésus d'une façon non négligeable, lui donnant une accentuation spécifique. Ainsi, grâce à l'emploi des motifs particuliers sus-énumérés, Jésus non seulement est situé, pour le transcender, dans le monde des héros et personnages gréco-romains du temps; mais sa vie s'en trouve marquée d'une façon encore plus profonde par les interventions souveraines de Dieu. Très judicieusement, Paul fait remarquer aussi qu'à deux reprises (27,8; 28,15) les récits du *Sondergut* retenus renvoient à l'aujourd'hui (ἡ σήμερον) de l'énonciation; ce qui laisse entendre que, par eux, le narrateur cherche à rejoindre d'une façon toute spéciale le monde de son lecteur. Par ce biais, ces textes du *Sondergut* apportent un éclairage intéressant sur le milieu porteur du premier évangile. Paul a tendance à le percevoir comme une communauté multiculturelle (336) où se mêlent éléments païens, qui se reconnaîtront facilement dans les motifs traditionnels de la culture contemporaine mis en œuvre dans les récits du *Sondergut*, et éléments juifs particulièrement sensibles à l'enracinement biblique de l'histoire de Jésus et le fort contingent de citations d'accomplissement qui l'émaillent.

Le travail de Paul n'est pas novateur sur tous les plans; il n'en présente pas moins de profondes originalités qui nous sortent des sentiers battus de l'exégèse du premier évangile. La première originalité, c'est de s'intéresser à un certain nombre de passages narratifs du *Sondergut* appréhendés comme constituant une entité identifiable dans le corpus matthéen. Cela permet de sortir du dilemme classique: Matthieu, un réviseur complétant Marc ou un héritier de la source des Logia? L'affaire est plus complexe. Cela permet aussi de se rappeler que si les discours sont effectivement importants dans le premier évangile, il n'en faut pas oublier pour autant l'intrigue narrative qui sous-tend l'ensemble du corpus et qui prend globalement la forme d'une vie de Jésus telle qu'on pouvait la concevoir à l'époque. Ce nous semble également une heureuse trouvaille d'avoir rassemblé en une même partie l'examen systématique des motifs typiques actualisés dans les textes retenus du *Sondergut* matthéen et la présentation de leurs élargissements dans les récits apocryphes. Cela situe bien la rédaction des livres narratifs du Nouveau Testament, évangiles et Actes, au cœur d'une production littéraire où le sérieux de la réflexion théologique n'avait pas encore complètement étranglé le «plaisir de raconter». On retrouve ce «plaisir de raconter» dans les Actes (337) ou dans des épisodes comme celui du/des possédé(s) de Gérasa/Gadara (Mc 5,1-20; Lc 8,26-39; Mt 8,28-34). Mais c'est un fait, bien souligné par Paul, que Matthieu est celui des évangiles canoniques, qui, par le biais de son *Sondergut*, fait le plus large accueil à ces récits pour nous inhabituels, voire insolites.

Un travail, comme celui de Paul, stimule le chercheur et l'invite à aller plus loin. Dans cette perspective, nous nous permettrons trois remarques.

1) Le fait de sélectionner un certain nombre de passages à l'intérieur d'un corpus est toujours une entreprise risquée. Pour remédier à ce handicap, Paul se fixe des critères fermes et objectifs. Nous nous étonnons cependant qu'elle n'intègre pas dans le groupe des textes qu'elle retient, la péricope de l'entrée de Jésus à Jérusalem (21,1-17). Dans cette péricope majeure du premier évangile, les ajouts propres à Matthieu abondent et ne nous éloignent pas des caractéristiques relevées dans les passages examinés: une citation d'accomplissement (Za 9,9); une mention redoublée de la filiation davidique de Jésus (21,9.15), le prophète de Nazareth en Galilée (21,11; voir 2,23); une présentation de son entrée dans la ville comme un «séisme» (21,10 avec emploi de *σεισμός*, comme en 27,51 et 28,4; voir aussi l'emploi du substantif en 27,54 et 28,2); la mise en avant de l'activité thaumaturgique de Jésus (21,14); l'altercation finale avec les grands prêtres et les scribes (21,15; voir aussi 2,4) s'achevant sur une dernière citation de l'Écriture prise en charge par Jésus lui-même (Ps 8,3LXX en 21,16). Sans conteste, les ajouts matthéens renforcent considérablement le rapprochement entre ce récit et ceux, connus aussi bien en contexte juif que gréco-romain, racontant l'entrée triomphale d'un grand personnage (sa *παρουσία*; voir 24,3.27.37.39) dans sa capitale ou une métropole. Et ce, même si pour finir le récit matthéen est davantage celui d'une anti-*parousia* que d'une *parousia* (W.D. Davies – D.J. Allison Jr, *Matthew III* [ICC; Edinburgh 1977] 113). Mais justement, nous avons là une belle illustration du fait que l'originalité matthéenne repose moins dans la reprise en tant que telle de motifs universellement connus que dans sa manière de gérer et d'organiser cette reprise.

2) Très logiquement, Paul annonce que se situant dans une perspective de critique rédactionnelle, elle s'intéressera peu aux questions d'historicité, comme à celles de l'histoire littéraire des passages retenus (7, n. 24). À notre sens, on peut toutefois regretter qu'elle ait trop souvent recours à l'hypothèse, à nos yeux trop facile, d'une tradition orale mise pour la première fois par écrit par Matthieu (117-118). La question est fort débattue et demanderait à elle seule la rédaction de tout un article; mais à l'arrière-plan de l'actuelle péricope de l'annonce à Joseph (1,18-25), il nous semble qu'on peut conjecturer l'existence d'une *Vorlage* bien structurée autour de la citation d'accomplissement d'Is 7,14. C'est de là, selon nous, que les motifs du songe et de l'apparition angélique auraient essaimé par duplication rédactionnelle dans les autres passages du *Sondergut* matthéen où on les rencontre. Ces motifs permettent bien sûr au rédacteur matthéen de souligner sur le registre théologique l'intervention décisive de Dieu dans le cours des événements. Mais sur le plan anthropologique, c'est également pour lui un bon moyen de souligner qu'à ses yeux justice (2,19; 27,19) et foi (14,31; 28,17) se situent sur ces lisières indécises (55-59) du savoir, du pouvoir et du faire, où l'être humain est conduit à investir les valeurs qui donnent sens et cohérence à son existence.

3) Avec beaucoup de pertinence, Paul relève qu'en dehors de 27,51-53 (nous ajouterons 21,1-7) les passages retenus se situent pour la majorité d'entre eux sur les «franges» de la vie de Jésus, au début et à la fin de l'évangile. Le début et la fin d'une œuvre, ce sont aussi les séquences où le narrateur cultive des liens particuliers avec son destinataire, soit pour nouer avec lui le contrat de lecture qu'il lui propose (rôle de l'introduction-prologue), soit pour le rendre au terme de leur parcours commun à l'aujourd'hui (27,15) de son espace familial. Dans ces conditions, on peut légitimement s'interroger sur la question de savoir si dans l'évangile de l'enfance, l'essentiel est de donner proleptiquement un aperçu global sur la personne et la destinée de Jésus (272-273) ou si c'est de suggérer à son lecteur modèle l'attitude à adopter vis-à-vis de celles-ci. Dans ce contexte interprétatif, le personnage de Joseph, cité à sept reprises en 1-2 (1,16.18.19.20.24; 2,13.19), n'est plus seulement un personnage secondaire dans l'histoire racontée (266-267); mais il devient la figure idéale du lecteur modèle tel que le narrateur matthéen le perçoit et le souhaite: grâce à Dieu, Joseph dépasse la tentation d'une rupture dans la dignité, à laquelle succombera en 27,57-60 un autre Joseph qui, après avoir enseveli Jésus avec les honneurs, s'en va (ἀπῆλθεν), tel le jeune homme, riche lui aussi, de 19,22. Bref, l'époux de Marie se comporte comme un juste authentique, accomplissant à la lettre (1,20-21 vs 24; 2,13 vs 14; 20a vs 21) et sans parole oiseuse (12,36) ce qu'en songe l'Ange du Seigneur lui prescrit. Si notre lecture de 1,18-2,23 est pertinente, cela veut dire que la communauté destinataire du premier évangile ne serait pas une communauté multiculturelle (336), mais une communauté judéo-chrétienne fortement imprégnée de la culture gréco-romaine du temps, à un point tel d'ailleurs que certains de ses membres craignent d'en perdre leur enracinement juif (5,17-20). Le défi de Matthieu serait alors de montrer que, de même que la clé du message émis par l'étoile des mages se trouve dans les Écritures (2,5-6), de même les attentes du monde environnant trouvent leur plein aboutissement

dans l'accomplissement jésuanique de ces mêmes Écritures. C'est ainsi que, par-delà les vicissitudes des temps présents, l'universalisme chrétien n'abolit pas, mais consacre l'élection d'Israël.

Ces quelques remarques n'ont pas pour but de minimiser la valeur de la belle monographie ici recensée, mais de montrer tout l'intérêt que nous lui avons trouvé. Que son auteur soit sincèrement félicité pour cet ouvrage bien mené, richement documenté et aux conclusions aussi mesurées que stimulantes.

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Wilfried ECKEY, *Das Lukasevangelium*. Unter Berücksichtigen seiner Parallelen, Teilband I: Lk 1,1–10,42; Teilband II: 11,1–24,53. Neukirchen-Vluyn, Neukirchener, 2004. xiv-496 p.; (viii)-497-1080 p. 14,5 × 22. €39 (Teilband I), €39 (Teilband II)

Eckey has written a very informative two-volume commentary which for some questions can function as a source book. His many years of scholarly activity and extensive knowledge of Lukan and related research are evident. This very detailed commentary grew out of his decades of teaching, of lecturing at various academic institutions and his fifty years of preaching activity. In his commentary he provides the usual foreword, a 54 page introduction, a thorough consideration of each passage, an imposing 76 page bibliography as well as an index of select names and topics.

Although his format leads to some repetition; Eckey pays close attention to the Greek, identifies *hapax legomena* and has reflected on challenging questions, e.g., how can one explain the agreements of Luke and Matthew in distinction to their source Mark. Eckey suggests a simple but appealing solution, the copies of Mark that they were using had been reworked. About their different phrasing of "Q" material, Eckey again notes the possibility of different copies. Moreover, he has supplied some very useful considerations, e.g., the thorough and instructive treatment of Luke's sources and vocabulary and style (12-42) and the connections between the resurrection narratives (985-988).

Eckey wrote the present commentary to provide helpful literary and historical information, but above all a theological reflection on the spiritual contents of the pericopes of Luke's Gospel. Eckey has designed his commentary primarily for professors and students of theology who wish to be informed about the theology of the third gospel and its relationship to the other gospels and to the cultural and religious history of the Hellenist-Roman world.

Eckey systematically approaches each pericope. When appropriate, textual questions are addressed. The "context" shows how the pericope fits in the given passage or section, and the "overviews", its structure. The

"comparison with the other Synoptics" addresses the sources of the pericopes, their parallels and the emphases and omissions of each author. Parallels from the Gospel of John and that of Thomas are also studied, as are those from Greek and Roman writings of the general period. As the title indicates, pointing out these parallels is a distinguishing feature of Eckey's two-volume work. The "excursus" and observations in the interpretations of the Lukan passages compare the expressions, words, narratives, traditions and texts in the time of Jesus, early Christianity and Luke. Thus the reader gets an insight into the world in which early Christianity existed and developed and in which Luke wrote.

Let me address some of the questions which Eckey's impressive two-volume commentary raises. My main concern is a theoretical one which, however, has a definite effect on the nature of a commentary; my question is: what should be considered in an introduction to a commentary on a gospel? In his, Eckey proposes a division of Luke's Gospel, its sources (Mark, "Q", Luke's *Sondergut*), Luke's relationship with John's Gospel and with the Gospel of Thomas, his vocabulary and style, the author and the time and place of composition. Certainly, all of these considerations are appropriate. My difficulty is that major questions about Luke's theology, Christology or understanding of community are not addressed in any significant way by Eckey in his introduction or anywhere else in his commentary, including the excursus. One could obviously argue that an author has a right to write a commentary as he envisions it and that any consideration of these topics would be partial since only one of Luke's two volumes is being studied. However, in not addressing such major questions a biblical scholar challenges himself or herself less in interpreting a given passage. Surely, individual passages are studied in detail and information gathered, but there is no resulting synthesis or general presentation of Luke's understanding of God, who Christ is and of community. Such a synthesis would have been beneficial to Eckey's own research and a real service to readers; and he also would have been more loyal to his primary intention: to provide a theological reflection on the spiritual contents of Luke's Gospel.

A commentary which pays particular attention to parallels can surely assist the readers in appreciating the milieu in which a book appears; however, the dating of such parallels in comparison to the given book is extremely important, if one wishes to use them to interpret the meaning of a given passage. Eckey does not always indicate the dating or whether he sees a given parallel as also important for the understanding of a passage. However, his careful attention to the Gnostic nature of the Gospel of Thomas is both helpful and refreshing.

Writing a commentary on Luke's Gospel is no easy task, for the majority of scholars are agreed that he also wrote the Acts of the Apostles. So, a commentary only on his Gospel will naturally have its limitations. On the other hand, in any search for parallels, those from Acts have particular importance. For instance, Eckey (559), does not tell us why the Pharisees are absent from Jesus' passion; Acts offers some reasons for this: the Pharisee Gamaliel's defense of the apostles (Acts 5,34-39), the identification of Paul as a Pharisee and the common belief of the Pharisees and Christians in the resurrection of the dead (Acts 23,6-8; 24,15.21; 26,4-8).

Few scholars will be completely satisfied with the divisions of Luke's Gospel offered by Eckey (1-13); they will be especially concerned about the part that Luke 9,51 and the journey to Jerusalem clearly appear to play in Luke's own mind. Even if one maintains that this division is artificial, it is still a reality. So, it is difficult to hold that it does not constitute a major division; moreover, given the phraseology of that verse, "When the days drew near for him to be taken up (τῆς ἀναλήψεως αὐτοῦ), he set his face to go to Jerusalem". The Greek word for "to be taken from" would most reasonably lead one to see the end of this journey in his "being taken up to heaven" (Luke 24,51) at the end of the Gospel or in the parallel story of the Ascension (Acts 1,1-11), where Luke twice uses the cognate Greek verb.

Eckey's understanding of some Lukan christological passages is questionable. A key passage is the announcement of Jesus' birth. Eckey does not see that Luke 1,33, "He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end", implies Jesus' resurrection. Otherwise, his reign and his kingdom would end. More importantly, Eckey does not observe that in this passage Luke draws a distinction between Jesus as "Messiah" and as "Son of God". However, in his consideration of Jesus before the Council, Eckey (916, 921) does recognize the weight given this last designation; in fact, Luke has in three passages separated expressions of Jesus as "Messiah" (Luke 1,32-33; 9,20; 22,67) and as "Son of God" (Luke 1,35; 9,35; 22,70) and so apparently does not give them the same meaning. The latter title has to do with Jesus' unique relationship with God. Eckey's explanation of Luke 10,22 is fine (480). Even if the passage comes from the Johannine school, Luke took it over and so accepted its thought.

In his consideration of Jesus' genealogy, Eckey does not stress that it goes back to God but to Adam (203-207). A number of scholars would agree with Eckey and see a theme of Jesus as the new Adam, but the emphasis is on "of God", the final two words in the pericope (Luke 3,38).

In his treatment of Luke 9, Eckey does not point out the number of parallels that C. Talbert ("The Lukan Presentation of Jesus' Ministry in Galilee", *RevExp* 64 [1967] 492-497) has demonstrated exist between this chapter and Luke 22-23.

1. In Luke 9,7-9, Herod hears of Jesus and seeks to see him; in Luke 23,6-12,15, Herod is glad Jesus is sent to him, for he has heard about him and was hoping to see some sign.

2. In Luke 9,10-17, Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God in connection with a meal. He blesses and breaks the loaves and fish and gives them to the disciples to distribute. In Luke 22,14-20, Jesus again speaks of the kingdom of God at a meal and gives thanks, breaks the bread and gives it to the disciples.

3. In 9,(22)44, the Son of Man is to be handed over into the hands of men; in Luke 22,(2.4)21-22, we read, "But behold the hand of him who hands me over is with me on the table. For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is handed over".

4. In Luke 9, 23-27, we read, "If any man would come after me, let ... take up his cross daily ... I say to you truly there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God". Luke 22,28-30 reads, "You are those who have continued with me in my trials; and I assign

to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on the thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel”.

5. In Luke 9,28-36, Jesus is on a mountain with his disciples. As he prays, heavenly visitors appear to him and speak of his exodus. The disciples are sleepy. In Luke 22,39-46. Jesus is on the Mount of Olives with his disciples. He prays about his death. The disciples are sleeping.

6. In both Luke 9,46-48 and 22,24-27, there is a dispute over greatness.

7. Let me add to these parallels Luke’s separation of the expressions and apparently also of the meanings of Jesus as “Messiah” (Luke 9,20; 22,67) and as “Son of God” (Luke 9,35; 22,70).

For Eckey, 949-951, Jesus’ death is a martyr’s death; this is true but not precise enough; for Luke views Jesus as the Servant of Yahweh during his passion see my *Luke’s Presentation of Jesus: A Christology* (Rome 2004) 96-99.

In the Emmaus story, Eckey’s attribution of the disciples’ blindness to the evil spirit goes too far (976); rather it represents their confusion and weakness of faith. Eckey is aware of the parallel which exists between the story of Emmaus and that of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. The latter ends with the baptism of the eunuch and Philip being carried away by an angel; why does Eckey in his explanation of the story of Emmaus write of a meal, and not a reference to the Last Supper, before the risen Jesus disappears? A reference to the Last Supper would be a better parallel to the baptism, and is there any other meal in Luke’s Gospel than that event which speaks of an identity between Jesus and the bread? Moreover, I would not speak as does Eckey of the return of the disciples of Emmaus as chiefly functioning to underline the appearance of the risen Jesus to Peter (983), for their returning to Jerusalem naturally flows from the movement of the story. It is the interruption of that beautiful story and separation of the disciples’ return from their announcement of the risen Jesus’ appearance to them that highlight his appearance to Peter.

We all take for granted that the print in footnotes will be small; however, the Neukirchener Verlag might want to reflect how much similar small print should be used in the body of a book.

Eckey’s many years of scholarly activity have enabled him to gather a vast amount of data and to write an informative two-volume commentary which helps us place Luke’s Gospel in its historical and literary context, provides source material on many questions and a better understanding of Luke’s thought.

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Volker GÄCKLE, *Die Starken und die Schwachen in Korinth und in Rom. Zu Herkunft und Funktion der Antithese in 1 Kor 8,1–11,1 und Röm 14,1–15,13* (WUNT 200). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2005. xviii-636 p. 15,5 × 23. € 79

This is a lightly revised version of Volker Gäckle's dissertation, written under the direction of Jörg Frey and accepted in the winter of 2005 by the University of Munich. It is a successful combination of interacting with the historical-critical approaches of the last two centuries for both the 1 Corinthians and Romans passages on "strong" and "weak" and offering a theological assessment of "weakness" in Paul's thought.

After an initial chapter that summarizes the literature on "strong" and "weak" (3-35), divided between literature on 1 Cor 8,1–11,1 (beginning with F. C. Bauer's 1831 study) and literature on Rom 14,1–15,13 (beginning with Max Rauer's 1923 work), the second chapter surveys "weakness" language in Hellenistic literature (36-109). The Jewish sources surveyed in this chapter are limited to the LXX, Philo, Josephus, and 4 Maccabees. Gäckle sees the self-understanding of the "strong" as influenced by popular Stoic understandings of the soul. He sees the "strong" as trying to move the "weak" toward their own "strong" view—an assumption that he has not proven—while Paul adds the new tactic (foreign to Stoic thought) of protecting the "weak" conscience, a move analogous to the shepherd passage in Ezekiel 34 (106-107). Against Theißen, Gäckle contends that the categorization of "weak" in 1 Corinthians 8–11 and Romans 14–15 does not primarily refer to their poverty or low social rank, but rather to their "cognitive-rational, educational and psychic-emotional" composition (107-108). One could summarize Gäckle's position by saying that he stands closer to Stowers than to Theißen on the question of what "weakness" means in the Hellenistic literary sources.

Chapter three concerns the conflict between "strong" and "weak" in Corinth (110-291). With little argumentation Gäckle rejects Bruce Winter's idea that the situation addressed in 1 Corinthians 8–11 arises from the introduction of the imperial cult into Corinth and a food shortage there. Instead, Gäckle sees the situation as arising from factors within the Corinthian church (111-112). While aware of *collegia* in the ancient world and the practice of communal meals in cults and the social context of the *macellum* (163-182) Gäckle does not mention the *collegia tenuiorum* here or in the preceding chapter, where it would also have been especially appropriate. His case against a socially defined description of the weak would be strengthened if he would at least consider these self-described groups of "weak" ones. Gäckle describes the "strong" in Corinth as well educated, elite intellectuals who are influenced by popular Stoicism, both in their view of human freedom and in the ease with which they could call others in their community as "weak" (216-217). Gäckle's "weak" in Corinth are not a clearly demarcated group. They abstain from food not because of Jewish sensibilities, but rather because of their pre-Christian involvement in pagan worship. Their respect for pagan deities was now showing through in their conscience-driven concern over consumption of food offered to idols (217-218). While Gäckle admits in this section that the "weak"

are probably from a lower social status, he seems reluctant to follow Theißen's more sociologically based description of the opposing groups. I think that Gäckle should have invested more energy in integrating his research on the identities of "strong" and "weak" with other descriptions of social difference that we find in this letter (especially 1 Cor 11,17-22).

A real strength of this chapter is Gäckle's explanation of Paul's argument in 1 Cor 8,1-11,1 (218-275). He finds six lines of argument in this section: Criticism against gnosis (8,1-3); a cosmological-ontological argument (8,4-6; 10,19-22); the ethical neutrality of food (8,4.8; 10,19.25-27); the pastoral responsibility for the "weak" (8,7-13; 10,28-30); an apodictic-parenetic argument (10,1-22); and a consideration of those outside the community (10,32). In the penultimate argument ("apodictic-parenetic argument") he shows that Paul is primarily concerned with how responses to the questions of food affect the corporate worship of the Corinthian church and that Paul is questioning the dividing lines and self-identity constructed by the "strong" (275). This section should be labeled, as his conclusion indicates, as an argument based on corporate worship. This would allow readers to see more easily how the scripture proofs in 10,1-13 (discussed on 258-264) fit seamlessly into this part of Paul's argument. In an excursus on Jewish *halakah* regarding idolatry and food, Gäckle argues convincingly against Tomson's more Torah-friendly Paul (276-279). The conclusion of this third chapter is that Paul is clearly not typically Jewish in his response to the problem posed by the "strong" and "weak" in Corinth. Paul's identity in Christ has made him much freer and more nuanced in how he deals with the question of eating meat offered to idols than how most forms of Judaism of the first century would respond. The arguments that lead toward this represent a positive step forward to help us read Paul not simply for his continuity with Judaism (à la Tomson and Nanos), but on his own terms.

Chapter four concerns the conflict between strong and weak in Rome (292-449). Gäckle rightly argues against those who see only an imaginary or hypothetical difference between "strong" and "weak" here in Romans. He raises pointed questions that this position cannot adequately answer, including why Paul would use a technical term for unclean food from Hellenistic Judaism (*koinon* in 14,14) in what might otherwise seem to be a Gentile situation (329).

Gäckle thoroughly surveys all the options for how to identify a "weak" group in Rome, siding finally with a Jewish Christian identify for them (369-374). Gäckle helpfully uses John Barclay's discussion of varying grades of assimilation among Diaspora Jews to situate the dispute in view here in Romans. Because this is simply a variation of a typical dispute that Diaspora Jews would have, Gäckle concludes that the judging that "strong" were exercising toward "weak" was focused on ethical propriety and not eschatological salvation (379-381). Gäckle's situation of the Romans discussion into the assimilation question of Diaspora Judaism is well made and worthy of more emphasis in studies on this section of Romans.

With regard to the "strong" in Rome, Gäckle emphasizes the limitations of Paul's description of them. His insistence that we cannot provide a sociological profile of the group is a useful response to recent attempts, including my own, of locating the Roman "strong" in their social context. It

is good that he notices Rom 11,17-25a in this discussion, and observes that Paul may have a certain group of people in mind (382).

The table providing a synoptic comparison of the "strong" and "weak" texts of 1 Cor 8-10 and Romans 14,1-15,13 on 438-440 is very helpful. While noting the differences in the texts that arise from Paul's different relationship to believing communities in Corinth and Rome, Gäckle emphasizes the similarities in Paul's approach to the disagreements in them (443-444).

This emphasis is related to a distinct contribution Gäckle offers in the end of chapter four: a compact argument that Paul introduced the terms "strong" and "weak" here in Romans. His arguments include Paul's use of differing measures of faith in Rom 12,3, the possibility that the letter carrier or people already in Rome would be able to explain Paul's use of "strong" and "weak," and the improbability that these pairs of group labels would arise in different situations in Corinth and Rome (446-449). Gäckle uses Paul's positive valuation of "weakness" in 2 Cor 10-13 as support for his response against the argument that Paul would not introduce the negative term "weak" to an audience with whom he wants to make a favorable impression (445). A general result of this insistence is that Gäckle reads the situations in Corinth and Rome together, since he holds onto the idea that Paul is addressing a real situation in Rome based on his experience with the situation in Corinth. His fifth chapter, "Weakness in Pauline Theology" continues in this direction, and this tendency to see the similarities between the two passages extends to the very conclusion of the book (518).

The fifth chapter examines Paul's concepts of weakness and strength in 1 Corinthians (450-471) and 2 Corinthians (471-508). The results are unremarkable, though it is helpful to have the relevant texts and connections made in one chapter. Paul's dealings with issues of weakness in 1 Corinthians and Romans is mainly in a pastoral mode on behalf of the weak, arising out of his own experience of weakness, the limitations of his own physical, earthly life as an apostle and the significance of these aspects of existence in light of the cross of Christ and the revealing word of Christ (507-508).

The sixth chapter represents a short summary of the whole book (509-518). It is more than what we might expect from a "Zusammenfassung", for its final pages offer "Theological Perspectives" that seek to offer principles from Paul's dealings with the differences between "weak" and "strong" to ecclesiastical and mission life today (515-518). Paul's freedom and sensitivity toward people's scruples serves as a model for how those carrying the gospel today will inevitably find their norms in dialogue with norms arising from non-Christian religions (517). Paul's top priority in dealing with the differences examined is not to teach correct knowledge but to ensure the eschatological salvation of the individuals involved. Love and the model of the crucified Christ are more significant for Paul to impart to the "weak" than knowledge. Paul's dealings with the differing groups in these New Testament letters offers the opportunity for similarly differing groups to learn how to use the occasion of a disagreement as an opportunity to show love and acceptance for one another. Church life, and even unity in faith, represents an ongoing move toward unity in diversity (518). An exhaustive bibliography and multiple indices helpfully conclude the volume.

The overall strength of this book is its comprehensive treatment of all the possible backgrounds for the dividing behaviors of abstinence that seem to drive Paul's teachings in 1 Corinthians 8–10 and Romans 14,1–15,13, analyses of Paul's lines of argument in both passages and consideration of what "weakness" means in Paul's theology. There are no major advances or breakthroughs in interpretation, though all commentators on these texts will need to consult this book to see how Gäckle handles the specific questions of each pericope.

In the same year that Gäckle's book appeared, Alain Gignac and André Gagné published their article: "N'est pas fort qui croyait l'être, et sa foi n'est pas celle qu'il convenait d'avoir! Ambiguïté discursive et programmation de lecture en Romains 14", *Theoforum* 35 (2004) 21–46. Its approach, influenced by structuralism and reader response theory, explores how Paul's argumentation causes "strong" and "weak" in his audience to question who is really inside these groups.

When read alongside that article, Gäckle's book represents what might be a temporary conclusion to the historical-critical exegetical approaches to Paul's "strong" and "weak" passages. For almost two centuries now, if we begin with F. C. Bauer's 1831 study on the 1 Corinthians text, we have been searching for all relevant parallels and seeking to follow Paul's argumentation in view of what we can learn about consumption of meat and wine in antiquity. We now await and should welcome approaches such as that offered by Gignac and Gagné that can add to our experience of what it means to read these passages in Paul's letters. Within the traditional, historical-critical approach to these passages, however, Gäckle helpfully sums up what has been done, weighs in with mature insight, and situates these passages in what can be said about Paul's main ideas on "weakness".

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Jens Bruun KOFOED, *Text and History. Historiography and the Study of the Biblical Text*, Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005. xiv-298 p. 16 × 23,5. \$34.50

L'école de Copenhague, ainsi qu'elle est désormais baptisée, s'est rendue fameuse pour ses positions caractérisées par un extrême scepticisme en ce qui concerne l'histoire d'Israël. Ces auteurs – dont les noms les plus connus sont ceux de N.P. Lemche, Th.L. Thompson, Ph.R. Davies, R.B. Coote et K.W. Whitelam — affirment en gros (1) que les textes bibliques ne peuvent être utilisés comme source valable pour la reconstruction d'une histoire d'Israël; (2) que l'histoire doit s'intéresser moins aux grands événements et aux grandes figures d'Israël qu'aux aspects socio-économiques de la société de l'ancienne Palestine (ces auteurs préfèrent nettement utiliser ce dernier terme); (3) que l'enquête ne doit pas partir des textes invérifiables et très souvent idéologisés, mais plutôt des «faits bruts» fournis par l'archéologie; (4) que l'Israël pré-exilique est fondamentalement une «invention» de l'époque perse ou hellénistique. Cette école est parfois qualifiée de «minimaliste» ou de «révisionniste» en raison de son attitude. Ses adversaires ont été tout naturellement baptisés «maximalistes» (W.G. Dever, I.W. Provan, B. Halpern, Z. Kallai...). Avouons que ces adjectifs ne sont pas très heureux et ne font guère avancer la discussion.

L'A. du livre que nous présentons est lui-même danois, mais il a étudié à la *Lutheran School of Theology* de Copenhague, non à l'Université de la même ville où enseignent N.P. Lemche et Th.L. Thompson. Le volume est une version révisée d'une thèse défendue à l'Université de Aarhus en 2002 sous la supervision des professeurs K. Nielsen et K. Jeppesen. L'A. a aussi étudié un an à Liverpool sous l'égide des professeurs A.R. Millard et K.A. Kitchen. Tous ceux qui ont suivi les récents débats dans le domaine se demanderont bien évidemment quelle position l'A. va adopter. Il lui faudra se situer entre les positions assez extrêmes de ses collègues de Copenhague et celles de ses mentors de Liverpool. D'emblée l'A. dévoile ses batteries. Il admet en effet qu'il faut abandonner les positions classiques sur l'histoire d'Israël héritées de A. Alt et M. Noth d'une part et de M.F. Albright et J. Bright de l'autre. Les critiques faites à ces deux écoles sont entièrement valables. M. Noth, par exemple, n'accorde pas assez d'importance aux données archéologiques et socio-économiques pour se fier beaucoup trop à ses propres hypothèses littéraires. On connaît par ailleurs les critiques cinglantes adressées à l'école de M.F. Albright par J. Van Seters et Th.L. Thompson, en particulier en ce qui concerne la «période patriarcale». Mais si l'A. est d'accord avec ses collègues de Copenhague en ce qui concerne la *pars destruens*, il l'est moins en ce qui concerne la *pars construens*. Il plaide en faveur d'une histoire qui tienne davantage compte de l'élément personnel dont le poids était considérable durant l'Antiquité. Il estime aussi que N.P. Lemche et Th.L. Thompson n'ont pas toujours traité avec la rigueur requise

les données textuelles, factuelles et archéologiques. Il conteste donc leurs conclusions dans plusieurs domaines et affirme que les textes bibliques contiennent des informations non seulement sur l'époque (tardive) de leur rédaction, mais aussi sur les périodes anciennes qu'ils veulent décrire. L'A. défend cette position avec nuance et il entend surtout discuter les livres des Rois, ce qui circonscrit beaucoup le problème. La discussion porte cependant plus souvent sur les méthodes que sur l'interprétation des faits concrets, sans que celle-ci soit pour autant négligée. L'A. offre de ce fait une excellente information à la fois sur les différentes manières d'écrire l'histoire d'Israël aujourd'hui et sur les différentes visions de l'histoire dans le monde universitaire, même s'il privilégie — ce qui est bien naturel — les travaux en langue anglaise.

L'ouvrage comporte cinq chapitres. L'introduction (chap. 1) aborde frontalement les questions méthodologiques liées à l'usage ou au non-usage des textes dans une enquête historique sur les origines d'Israël. Le paysage a changé en raison de l'impact de deux écoles sur le monde de l'exégèse biblique: l'école des Annales (M. Bloch, L. Febvre, F. Braudel) qui insiste beaucoup sur l'importance des données socio-économiques dans l'élaboration de l'histoire; les tendances de l'herméneutique post-moderne qui tend à nier la différence fondamentale entre histoire et fiction. En outre, dans le monde biblique, il faut tenir compte des études synchroniques qui remettent en question toute recherche «génétique» à propos des textes bibliques. Dans son examen critique, J.B.K. note entre autres que la méthode de l'école des Annales a été développée par des médiévistes et non par des historiens de l'antiquité. S'il est possible d'étudier l'économie et la société du moyen âge, la situation est bien plus problématique en ce qui concerne l'antiquité et en particulier le monde biblique.

En outre, les données économiques et sociales expliquent le contexte de certaines décisions, mais n'expliquent pas certains choix surprenants et inattendus comme celui de Nabonide qui va vivre dix ans dans l'oasis de Témân. Enfin, s'il est vrai qu'histoire et fiction ont des points communs, les critères de vérité sont différents. Le lecteur d'un ouvrage d'histoire a le droit de pouvoir vérifier ce qui est affirmé, ce que ne demande pas le lecteur d'un roman.

Le second chapitre aborde le problème de la date tardive des textes bibliques. J.B.K. discute surtout l'affirmation de N.P. Lemche selon laquelle les témoignages oraux sont incontrôlables et que, par conséquent, ils ne sont d'aucune utilité pour l'historien. De manière analogue, les témoignages écrits sur un lointain passé ne sont pas fiables. J.B.K. reconnaît qu'aucun historien n'est parfaitement objectif et impartial. Les «minimalistes» tout comme les «maximalistes» sont simplement logiques dans l'application de leurs présupposés méthodologiques lorsqu'ils traitent des sources orales ou écrites. Tous ont des présupposés, ce qui est inévitable, mais il est essentiel d'en être conscient et surtout de ne pas confondre méthode et «preuves». La méthode utilisée ne permet pas, en tant que telle, de valider ou d'invalider les données à notre disposition. C'est pourquoi J.B.K. estime qu'il peut questionner les raisons pour lesquelles Lemche doute de la fiabilité de la tradition, qu'elle soit orale ou écrite. Son scepticisme est exagéré. Les livres de Rois, puisque c'est d'eux qu'il s'agit concrètement, peuvent donc contenir des informations

valables pour l'historien même s'ils ont été rédigés longtemps après les faits rapportés. C'est ce qu'il va démontrer dans les chapitres suivants.

Le troisième chapitre discute des «différences linguistiques» qui permettent de distinguer différents niveaux, plus anciens ou plus récents, dans le texte de 1-2 Rois. Ce chapitre analyse une série d'indicateurs tels que la présence d'aramaïsmes dans les textes tardifs, l'existence de dialectes nordiques comme dans le cycle d'Élie et d'Élisée, les différences grammaticales ou orthographiques entre l'hébreu pré-exilique et l'hébreu post-exilique et l'emploi de vocables différents selon les époques. Les conclusions sont nuancées et plutôt modestes. S'il est possible de distinguer au moins deux stades importants dans l'évolution de la langue hébraïque, un stade pré-exilique et un stade post-exilique et tardif, il est impossible d'être plus précis en ce qui concerne le passage progressif du premier au second stade, en particulier durant l'époque perse.

Le quatrième chapitre traite de la comparaison entre les données fournies par 1-2 Rois et les documents extra-bibliques sur les mêmes événements ou les mêmes personnages. Le tableau synoptique et récapitulatif de toutes ces données (168-169) est très utile pour comprendre de quoi il retourne dans la discussion. Les conclusions sont importantes. J.B.K. affirme au terme d'une enquête serrée que 1-2 Rois est en accord avec les sources extra-bibliques chaque fois que la comparaison est possible, et cela quelle que soit la date de rédaction des textes bibliques. En particulier, les souverains étrangers mentionnés dans 1-2 Rois le sont dans l'ordre chronologique exact, leur noms sont écrits de manière correcte et leur interaction avec les rois d'Israël et de Juda correspond aux informations contenues dans les documents extra-bibliques. Les livres des Rois sont donc à mettre sur le même pied que les *Babylonica* de Bérosee, les *Antiquités Juives* de Flavius Josèphe ou le livre de Tobie (du point de vue de l'arrière-fond historique). L'A. commente ensuite deux exemples: le discours de Rabsakeh (2 R 18) et le récit de la reine de Saba (1 R 10). Personnellement, je trouve le premier exemple plus convaincant que le second parce qu'il est difficile de préciser la date de composition de 1 R 10, un récit aux traits légendaires assez évidents. Le commerce de l'encens, qui fournit le contexte du récit, a duré des siècles et les auteurs bibliques avaient bien des raisons d'utiliser ces données pour glorifier le règne de Salomon.

Le cinquième chapitre contient une longue discussion sur la question délicate du genre littéraire. La discussion est longue et parfois sinueuse, mais les résultats sont assez clairs. L'A. plaide en faveur d'une notion plus souple de «genre littéraire», il s'appuie en partie sur P. Ricœur, puis il recourt à un modèle proposé par J. Marincola, un spécialiste de l'historiographie classique. Celui-ci utilise cinq critères dans l'analyse des œuvres historiographiques: (1) le genre littéraire narratif ou non-narratif; (2) le point de vue du narrateur (focalisation); (3) les limites chronologiques; (4) l'arrangement chronologique ou le «sens du temps»; (5) le thème central (*subject matter*). Selon l'A. les livres des Rois passent le test et peuvent donc être considérés à bon droit comme une œuvre historiographique *in its own way*, d'une manière qui lui est propre. Il s'agit bien d'une œuvre narrative bien qu'elle soit plus proche de la chronique que du récit bien construit. L'œuvre adopte un point de vue particulier, celui du sort des royaumes

d'Israël et de Juda. C'est la raison pour laquelle les souverains étrangers ne sont mentionnés que lorsqu'ils jouent un rôle sur la scène intérieure de ces deux royaumes. 1-2 Rois adopte une chronologie dont le début et la fin sont bien marqués: la mort de David d'une part et les dernières années du roi Joiakîn de l'autre. Toutefois, il n'est pas facile de déterminer le sens de la «trame» qui sous-tend ce récit (histoire d'une catastrophe annoncée? ou bien la fin de l'histoire laisse-t-elle briller une lueur d'espoir?). Cette partie de l'argumentation est plus fragile et l'A. en est bien conscient. En effet, la division en livres dans le canon actuel est tardive et assez artificielle. Par ailleurs, existe-t-il une vraie «trame» qui unifie l'ensemble 1-2 Rois? La chose n'est pas impossible, mais il reste encore beaucoup de travail à faire dans ce domaine. Par ailleurs, il est certain que ces deux livres supposent une chronologie précise, ce que personne ne met en doute. Enfin, l'A. rappelle à juste titre qu'il y a plusieurs façons d'écrire l'histoire et que les définitions trop rigides ne tiennent pas compte de la variété des œuvres historiques qui ont été écrites depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à nos jours. Il existe d'autres histoires que les histoires politiques et militaires ou que les «histoires totales» préconisées par certains adeptes de l'école des Annales. Manéthon et Bérose sont différents de Thucydide et de Polybe, mais faut-il pour autant leur dénier le titre d'historiens? Les livres des Rois ne peuvent-ils être considérés comme œuvre historique parce qu'il adopte un point de vue théologique sur l'histoire d'Israël et de Juda? Sur ce point, l'A. renvoie au commentaire sur 1-2 Rois de I.W. Provan. Certes, l'A. est conscient qu'il faut ajouter des nuances à ce premier résultat, mais il n'en reste pas moins ferme en ce qui concerne ses conclusions: 1-2 Rois est une œuvre historique et on ne peut le nier en accusant ses auteurs de ne pas être des historiens au sens moderne du terme. En outre, il est possible de montrer que cette histoire est fiable lorsqu'une contre-épreuve est possible.

L'A. reconnaît les limites de son travail dont la qualité dépend en grande partie de celle des ouvrages qu'il cite abondamment. D'autre part, cette thèse clarifie beaucoup la situation et ce avec un calme et une sérénité que l'on souhaiterait rencontrer plus souvent dans ce genre de débat. L'A. parviendrait-il à convaincre ses interlocuteurs? Il a peut-être tendance, à certains moments, à vouloir faire de la surenchère ou à partir d'un présupposé (trop?) favorable. Il reste également quelques questions. Selon les auteurs deutéronomistes de 2 R 17, la fin du royaume de Samarie est due à l'infidélité à la loi et à l'alliance. Faut-il comprendre que si le peuple avait été plus «pieux» il n'aurait pas été annexé par l'empire assyrien? Ou bien l'explication théologique doit-elle être corrigée et complétée par des explications d'ordre politique, économique ou stratégique? Ou encore faut-il supposer que les auteurs bibliques utilisent un langage théologique tout en étant parfaitement conscients des autres données du problème? S'agit-il alors d'une simple transposition ou d'une manipulation des données? Une autre question se pose à propos du parti pris des auteurs bibliques. Le règne d'Achab est-il à juger de manière aussi négative que dans 1 Rois 17-22? Faut-il juger le règne de Jéhu de manière favorable comme en 2 R 9-10 ou défavorable comme Os 1,4? Le règne de Jéroboam II est-il un temps de répit (2 R 14,25-27) ou est-il la cause directe des catastrophes qui s'ensuivent (Amos 7,9.11)? La révolte d'Ézéchias est célébrée comme un grand moment de l'histoire de Juda (2 R

18–19), alors qu’Is 22,1–14 est certes moins enthousiaste. Le roi Manassé est présenté comme le plus abominable des souverains de Juda (2 R 21,1–18), mais avait-il vraiment le choix et ne devait-il pas subir les conséquences de la politique de son père Ézéchias? Comment interpréter aujourd’hui les explications de l’histoire proposées par la Bible et les jugements qu’elle porte sur le passé? Voilà le genre de questions qu’il faudra bien aborder un jour. Toujours est-il que l’A. aura ramené la discussion sur le juste terrain, celui des arguments et des présupposés méthodologiques. Ce n’est pas le moindre de ses mérites.

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Étienne NODÉ, *La crise maccabéenne: Historiographie juive et traditions bibliques*; Préface de Marie Françoise Baslez (Collection «Josèphe et son temps» 6; Paris: Cerf, 2005), X + 446 pp.

The problems of the “Maccabean crisis” have drawn the attention of scholars ever since Elias Bickerman in his groundbreaking and timely study *Der Gott der Makkabäer* (Berlin 1937; English translation by H. Moehring, Leiden 1979) attempted to solve the question of the causes, sequence, and meaning of events in Jerusalem during the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

Nodet attempts a completely fresh approach. He resolutely intends to distinguish between memory, the “facts” behind the memory, and their institutional significance (6–7). Starting from commemoration and tradition presented in the different sources (ch. 1), he proceeds to search for the “facts” (ch. 2), which he first traces backwards from Simon to Judas Maccabeus, then from Judas’ death to his major achievements, and finally to the beginning of Hellenistic reforms, revolt, and persecution in reverse chronological order (84–158). This technique, which functions like an archeologist digging deeper and deeper into the past, helps to keep the reader on guard concerning what seem to be well-known sequences of events. It becomes a bit cumbersome when a cross-reference indicates that certain documents are dated earlier and will *therefore* be discussed later (120–121).

The third and longest chapter deals with “Institutions et structures” (181–379). It includes substantial sections on the relations between Samaria and Judea (181–212), the status of Judea and the high priests from Onias III to Simon Maccabee (212–242), Israelite (high) priesthood from Alexander the Great to the Hasmonians (242–297), Temple and profanation (297–339), *Asidaiot* and Essenes (340–379). These detailed analyses are followed by a substantial concluding chapter, an appendix on Josephus and 1 Maccabees, and a list of abbreviations which functions also as a selective bibliography. There is a detailed table of contents but no indices, which could have helped to make the precious observations contained in this volume more accessible.

As one has come to expect of Étienne Nodet, this work contains many acute observations as well as positions that are bound to be controversial.

Among these is the question of the relations between Babylonian, Judean, Samaritan, and Egyptian forms of "Israelite" religion, treated already in earlier publications. After a concise and useful summary of the various attempts to identify the origin of the Samaritans, Nodet concludes that they are best explained as representatives of older expressions of Israelite religion, whereas Jerusalem-centered Second Temple Judaism in general represented more recent developments. In Nodet's view, Mattathias and Jonathan (and Simon Maccabeus?) appear to represent traditional Israelite religion of the Samaritan type, whereas Judas Maccabeus represents a Judean type of Judaism of Babylonian origin based on Nehemiah's reform (209-210, 295-297, 390). Thus, according to Nodet's tentative proposal, Judas may not have been a member of the Hasmonean family. The evidence offered for such a revolutionary view seems to be very slim and includes Judas' refraining from fighting on the Sabbath, whereas Mattathias had permitted such action. Furthermore, Judas was not originally connected with the rededication of the Temple at all, but his name and his actions were added secondarily in 1 Macc 4:36-59. Nodet neatly divides this passage between those portions which include Judas and those which exclude him, explaining that the proposed cut-and-paste operation is "simple, mais peut-être un peu discutable" (131). He does not offer any criteria for his division of the text, which does not seem self-evident to this reviewer.

Nodet demonstrates the unreliability of the sources and the consequent fragility of our knowledge. More systematically than ever before, he tries to show how the memory of events was shaped by a definite agenda. Sometimes he seems to discard material in 1 and 2 Maccabees that may be of historical significance, such as the support for Judas Maccabee shown by priests in the temple when threatened by the Seleucid commander Nicanor (238; 1 Macc 7:33-38 || 2 Macc 14:31-36). While earlier scholars were rather pessimistic about how much can be known about the *Asidaioi* (1 Macc 2,42; 7,13; 2 Macc 14:6; most recently D. R. Schwartz; *The Second Book of Maccabees. Introduction, Hebrew Translation, and Commentary* [Jerusalem 2004] 260-261 [in Hebrew]), Nodet considers this group a literary fiction entirely (354-359). Nodet's conclusions are at times sweeping, but appear not sufficiently supported by the available evidence.

Beyond the well-known pro-Hasmonean stance of 1 Maccabees, he points to more subtle determinants of the way memory was presented. One element to which he returns again and again is the Egyptian connection. He points to hints that Egypt played a central role in Palestine even during the Seleucid period. The types of evidence he adduces for this Egyptian role are varied – and of varying weight. This reviewer finds it difficult to accept the assertion that Onias' name proves his Egyptian connections: "Onias avait des attaches égyptiennes, comme le prouve son nom (« Ōn » peut désigner le soleil)" (103). Later on, an Egyptian origin for the Oniads is claimed, with not much more than the intriguing connection of names as its basis (272-273). The fact that Onias appears to be the Greek transcription of a Hebrew name (rendered *Yohanan* [יְהוֹנָן] in Sir 50,1, *Honi* [חֹנִי] in *m. Ta'anit* 3:8) is not taken into consideration.

Nodet has been stressing in several of his recent books the importance of the Slavonic Version of Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum*. He notes certain Jewish

traits absent from the extant Greek, plus other features difficult to attribute to a Christian redactor/interpolator. To explain these, he hypothesizes that Josephus himself created a Greek draft translation from the original Aramaic version of his *Bellum*, as a basis for the editorial work of his assistants. While such a theory may be attractive because it offers a possible explanation for certain Jewish features, it seems to create more problems than solutions. Among these I would point out the following:

(1) Nodet himself notes specific parallels with 4 Maccabees (53-54). In fact, in the story of the removal of the Golden Eagle and the noble death of Judas and Matthias and some of their followers (Greek *Bellum* 1.648-655), only the Slavonic version has a reference back to "Eleazar and the seven Maccabean brothers, and the mother, who made men [of them]" (transl. Leeming and Osinkina). In the extant Greek versions of Josephus (*Bellum* and *Antiquitates*) Josephus never refers to these "Maccabean" martyrs and does not seem to know 2 Maccabees, much less 4 Maccabees, which has been dated some time in the early 1st century CE by Bickerman, but that date has been altered to about 100 CE or slightly later (J. W. van Henten, *The Maccabean Martyrs as Saviors of the Jewish People. A Study of 2 and 4 Maccabees* [Leiden 1997] 78). Furthermore, the name "Maccabean" martyrs is not documented in either of these books but became common in later Christian tradition by the 4th century (Gregory of Nazianzen, *Sermon* 15, PG 35.912; Augustine, *Sermon* 300, PL 38.1379; M. Schatkin, "The Maccabean Martyrs", *Vigiliae Christianae* 28 [1974] 97-113). Apparently, no pre-medieval Hebrew or Aramaic text applies the name "Maccabees" to the martyrs. Therefore, Nodet's tentative suggestion that their name is derived from Hebrew *maqab* ("hammer") because they defeated Antiochus IV in a way different from Judas Maccabeus has no support in any source (54, note 1).

(2) Several of the additions are anti-"Latin" or anti-Roman (Thackeray #4, 5). This would be language unbecoming a recently released Roman prisoner such as Josephus. In Josephus' time, "Latin" was a juridical term referring to a certain kind of citizenship status, a meaning clearly not intended in the Slavonic additions. References to "Latins" in this context reflect later polemics between Eastern and Western Christendom.

(3) A comparison with Heracles (Thackeray, # 3), requires a Hellenistic background that Josephus may not have had early on, that he would probably not have emphasized in an Aramaic work, and that he would hardly have dropped in a longer Greek version.

(4) In the NT, the word "forerunner" (πρόδρομος) recurs only once (Heb 6:20), with reference to Jesus, and is never applied to John the Baptist, as Nodet correctly notes. The term is applied to the Baptist later on, as in the name of a Greek Orthodox monastery on Christian Quarter Road in the Old City of Jerusalem. Nodet (in his French edition of H. St. J. Thackeray's, *Josephus the Man and the Historian* [*Flavius Josèphe l'homme et l'historien*, Paris 2000, 186 note 1]) suggests that this term, used as a title for John the Baptist, cannot be based on Josephus.

The author pays a great deal of attention to problems of chronology. This is in part expressed in several chronological tables. These would be even more helpful if they provided a more consistent chronology. The dates given

for various high priests change frequently: Onias was assassinated in 172 (p. 9), in 171/170 (p. 159); Alcimus was high priest (170?) 162-159 (p. 9) or 161-159 (p. 166). His death is once dated in 152 BCE by mistake (p. 389). Simon's high priesthood lasted 144-135 (p. 9) or 143-134 BCE (p. 160). Menelaus became high priest in 173 (pp. 9, 159), in 171 (p. 12), in 174 (p. 166). All of these dates (except Menelaus' accession in 174 BCE) may be defensible, but should not be included side by side in the text. Most recent works date Menelaus' accession to 172 BCE on the basis of an attentive reading of 2 Macc 4 in combination with the data about Antiochus IV's accession.

Nodet perceptively notes many textual difficulties in 1 Maccabees and Josephus' *Antiquities*. In his detailed appendix on their relations, he tries to resolve some problematic textual matters by arguing that Josephus used the lost Hebrew text of 1 Maccabees (415-423). Several cases prove beyond doubt that the original text of 1 Maccabees was composed in Hebrew, not that Josephus used a Hebrew rather than a Greek text (1 Macc 2,1; 3,15). In other cases, Nodet does not seem to recognize how close Josephus is to the Greek text. At 1 Macc 3,17 he claims that Josephus must have had a Hebrew צום [*tsum*] rather than a Greek ἀστέω as the basis for his νηστεύω ("to fast", *Ant.* 12.290). But ἀστέω means "to abstain from food", "to fast" (LSJ) and is therefore almost synonymous with νηστεύω (cf. Esth 4,16 where צום is rendered by a form of ἀστέω). At 1 Macc 4,7 || *Ant.* 12.297 he seems to overlook close parallels in order to establish more distant ones. Nodet does not take into consideration the work of Bloch, who more than a century ago provided a long list of close verbal parallels between the Greek texts of 1 Maccabees and the *Antiquities* (H. Bloch, *Die Quellen des Flavius Josephus* [Stuttgart 1879; repr. Wiesbaden 1968] 80-90). He suggests that the spelling of Hebrew and Greek names and their similarities and differences in 1 Maccabees and the *Antiquities* suggest that Josephus relied directly on a Hebrew version of 1 Maccabees. An analysis shows, however, that Greek names in the two extant works are always identical. This would be difficult if Josephus was working from a Hebrew original. The differences in the Hebrew names confirm Josephus' tendency to add Greek endings or to "Hellenize" them in other ways, which he himself explicitly justifies (*Ant.* 1.129).

Nodet's work is not an easy read, and one will find many points with which to disagree. His freedom in taking some texts at face value, as he does with the documents in 1 and 2 Maccabees, or in denying any historical basis for other passages, without any clear criteria, is at times frustrating. Yet, he offers thought-provoking perspectives that should not be dismissed too lightly. The abiding relevance of Bickerman's work resides not in the fact that he offered the correct solutions but that he asked important questions in a new way. Hopefully, in a similar way Nodet will help a new generation of scholars to rethink "the Maccabean crisis".

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ISSN 0006-0887

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Autorizz. Tribunale di Roma n. 6229 del 24-3-1958 del Reg. della Stampa



Associato all'Unione Stampa Periodica Italiana

Finito di stampare il 25 gennaio 2008

Tip.: Ist. Salesiano Pio XI - Via Umbertide, 11 - 00181 Roma